

Boy Life

IN THE
UNITED STATES

Boys





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JOE'S DAY-DREAMS.

BOY LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY

BY
H. H. CLARK, U. S. N.

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TO

COMMODORE STEPHEN B. LUCE, U. S. NAVY,

Whose earnest and unremitting devotion to the United States Naval Training Service has contributed so much toward its present efficiency and its future promise, this little book is respectfully dedicated.

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BOY LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

CHAPTER I.

"IN THE BLOOD."

UPON a large tree, blazed by many an Indian hatchet and lumberman's axe, standing near a newly-made road in the Aroostook wilderness, flamed out, one September day, in brightly-colored letters, to catch the eye of the passing boy traveller, a handbill which read as follows :

WANTED!

500 BOYS

FOR THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

Directly underneath this announcement, in smaller type, the terms of enlistment for naval apprentices were stated, together with such other information as it would be necessary for a candidate to know before setting out from home.

How this advertisement thrilled Joe Bently, a farmer's boy, who, while riding by on his shaggy pony, chanced to see it, only those can appreciate who, like him, have an intense longing for the sea. He had scarcely finished reading it before he had turned his pony's head homeward, and with a vigorous application of a willow switch, was flying along at a pace only rivalled by the ancient Paul Revere, or Sheridan on his famous ride to Winchester.

"Mother!" he shouted, bursting into the kitchen where Mrs. Bently was busily engaged getting supper. "Can't I go now? There's a notice over there in the woods that tells all about it."

His mother looked up with a troubled face. She had heard about the "notice." It had been addressed to the postmaster of the neighboring village, and had reached him the night before. But Hiram Coburn, the poor cobbler who held that official relation to the government in that retired spot, had not the wall space sufficient in the little room that served the double purpose of workshop and mail-assorting, for a large placard, and, therefore, after much cogitation, had taken his shoemaker's hammer and nails and fastened it, early in the day, to "Indian Tree," as it was called. A passing neighbor had seen it, and dropped in at the Bentlys' on his way home from the mill that morning, to tell about it and talk it over, country fashion. All day long Mrs. Bently had carried a load upon her heart.

"Now's my chance, mother," the lad continued ; "the Navy is a good deal better place than the merchant service. There's no end of teaching and drilling on the schoolships, and what a fellow can't learn there about being a sailor ain't worth learning. I've been finding out all about it."

The mother looked sadly for a moment at her impetuous boy, walking up and down the kitchen with flushed cheeks and eager face, and then said in a trembling voice :

"But how can we spare you, Joe? Father is getting old. If you go away, there'll be no one to help him but me and the girls. He works too hard now."

"Oh, I'll send him money—all I get," pleaded Joe. "I reckon it'll be enough to hire a farm hand in my place." A moment's silence followed, and the lad burst out again: "It's no use! I've tried to settle down and be content, and I can't! I can't be a farmer, and father knows it as well as I do. It's got to come, sooner or later; I can't stay here. I must go to sea. I tell you, mother, it's *in the blood!* What's the use of fighting against it?"

This kind of talk was not a new thing at the Bently farmhouse. For several years it had been the dream of Joe's life to see the world; and to see it as a sailor boy—a profession which was peculiarly fascinating to his uninstructed imagination. He had often teased his father to let him make one voyage, if no more; but Mr. Bently had thus far

persistently declined the request, and treated Joe's desire as a mere boyish whim which he would soon outgrow. "All boys of his age want to rove," he used to argue; "they'll get steady when they grow up." And therefore, just as in his young manhood he had "set his face as a flint Zionward," so had he "set his face as a flint" against his son's propensity to leave home and try the fortunes of the sea. He was an obstinate "professor" and a no less obstinate father.

Mrs. Bently looked at the matter from a different standpoint. She knew what this longing for the sea meant, and though heartbroken at the idea of parting from her only boy, she was inclined to yield to his earnest appeals. Herself the daughter of a successful sea-captain, she had, in her girlhood, made several voyages with her father to far-off lands; and though for five and twenty years she had not gazed upon the ocean, the magic of blue water exercised its spell on her still. At the threshold of young womanhood, her father died suddenly; the bulk of his property went down shortly after in an uninsured ship, and the bereaved girl had turned her back on the seaport town which had been her home, to seek her subsistence as a schoolteacher in Northern Maine. There, in a few years, she had been wooed and won by Isaiah Bently, a rising young farmer and a leading member of the Congregational Church of M——. Her home had had its lights and shadows, its joys and hardships. Liv-

ing remote from town and school privileges, she had herself instructed her children; and though denied the books and society for which her mind thirsted, she preserved a certain refinement of manner and feeling which gave her home a reputation for miles around.

Often during the childhood of her children she had been wont to brighten the long winter evenings with stories of the sea — her own varied experiences afloat and ashore in foreign lands, and the traditions of her sailor ancestry. She did not realize at the time what seed she was sowing, and how receptive the soil in one heart, at least, of her interested hearers, until one night, after an oft-repeated and vivid recital of the rescue of a man who fell overboard in a terrible gale, little Joe, then but ten years old, had suddenly exclaimed, "Ma, I want to be a sailor!" From that time the stories of the sea were gradually suppressed, and the mother taxed her inventive powers to the utmost to provide interesting games and pastimes in their stead. But the hereditary instinct in her boy which her stories had not originated, only fed, was not to be suppressed. The fever was *in the blood*.

For his father's sake Mrs. Bently sought, as Joe grew older, to quench his passion, and when his disappointment and her husband's disapproval, like two heavily-charged thunder clouds, came into collision, with womanly tact she drew away each bolt of anger lest it should shatter some beautiful branch on the

fair tree of affection growing within the garden of their home. But many a night when the fire burned low, and Joe had long been sleeping in his garret overhead, she would plead for him.

"You know," she would say to her husband, "Joe doesn't take to farm work, and he's just crazy for the sea. He is getting to be almost a man in size, and to have a mind of his own. If we keep on opposing him it will only alienate his feelings more and more, and keep us all unhappy. Why not let him make the trial? If he gets sick of it, he will gladly come back to the farm."

Then Mr. Bently would pray that if it were God's will that their boy should go forth from the shelter of his home, the way might be opened, and duty made plain, and the stumbling-blocks be removed. But the next day Joe's importunities would find him as unyielding as ever.

Despite Joe's restlessness of temperament, he had been carefully trained, and in the final issue of all matters of family discipline, was under subjection to his parents' will. He had never joined the Church, or made "a profession" even, as it was called, but in the very core of his being he was honest, straightforward, reverential. He hated all meanness. The cowardly idea of sneaking away from home, and usurping the direction of his own life, never once came into his head. The smart of continued disappointment was hard to bear, but his filial obedience never relaxed. Thanks to the steady

influence of consistent Christian surroundings, his conscience had been kept sensitive and true, and though he had his weaknesses, there were fibres in his character which would stand the strain in the hour of temptation.

Withal he was very tender-hearted. Any grief which he might cause his parents in wayward moments, in his better moods cut him to the heart. Often when his father showed sorrow instead of anger at some manifestation of restlessness on his part, he had a spasm of self-rebellion against this tormenting desire to leave home; but some new incident was always happening to cast fresh fuel on the smouldering flame, which would shortly blaze forth with more intensity than ever. Some boys, like birds, are born with migratory instincts, and all the beautiful home autumns and Indian summers in the world cannot keep them from their predetermined flight.

It was the handbill nailed to "Indian Tree" which finally turned the scale in Joe's favor. When that appeared, his father concluded that it was a "sign of Providence," and no longer withheld his consent. The little household at once became a scene of lively confusion in making preparations for Joe's departure. Knitting needles were busy with mittens and stockings, and the mother's experience furnished just the information of what was most important by way of outfit. Mr. Bently wrote to the commandant of the training squadron and secured

the necessary papers, all of which were duly signed and sealed. Meantime Joe had gone around among the neighbors far and near and bade them all good-by.

The last night at home had come. Was the clamor of the elements on that long-remembered evening a prophecy that he was going forth to a tempestuous life? The wind roared among the trees. The rain, falling in a deluge from the sky was hurled against the cottage like the surf of an angry sea. The house trembled at the repeated shocks. Every blast of the warring gale caused the younger members of the group gathered in the great kitchen, to shudder—all but Joe. Their quickened imaginations pictured wild seas lashed by the storm, a foundering ship, and their brother clinging to a single spar, calling in vain for help.

"Isn't it dreadful?" sobbed Mollie Bently. "I can't bear to think of Joe going off"—

"Hush, Mollie dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Bently, as a great limb came crashing down on the roof and rolled into the yard. "All the dangers of the world do not belong to the sea. If they did, poor cousin George would not have been killed while logging last winter. I never used to think, when a girl, that a storm at sea was so terrible. It always made me feel how great God is, and what little things men are. We can trust Joe in his hands. Danger should be the last thing a manly boy should fear going out to make his way in life."

Later in the evening, Mr. Bently took down the old Bible and read the one hundred and seventh Psalm — that most appropriate selection for them "that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters." The family then sang, "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah!" Joe's ordinarily clear tenor being somewhat tremulous as he began to realize the coming change in his life, and that he was joining in the family devotions for the last time in years. In the fervent prayer which followed, Mr. Bently besought the Lord to make Joe's integrity like the armor which the arrows of temptation could never pierce, and that the gentle influence of home might be as a plaited shield to ward off "the fiery darts of the wicked one."

Meanwhile the storm had broken. One after another the stars came out. The moon burst forth from rifts of scurrying clouds and shed a gentle beauty on the outer world. Peace settled down upon the little farmhouse both without and within, and sweet slumber soon caused each inmate to forget the grief of parting till the day broke which was to witness the going forth of our hero to the life he had coveted so long.

Joe was up betimes next morning. A beautiful day had dawned and completely dissipated the gloomy forebodings of the previous evening. Joe had to make hasty preparations to catch the forenoon train for Bangor, at a station twenty miles away. He ran to the barn to pat his pony's neck, and to

say good-by to Turk and Brindle, who responded by a loving look. There was not a duck, or chicken, or calf, on the whole place, that was not on the best of terms with Joe ; and he could scarcely keep back the tears as they came running to him, each to claim its little share of his notice.. It was curious how everything about the old farm took on a fascination that last morning, causing him to say to himself a dozen times that he wished he had never decided to go away. It was hardest of all to take leave of his mother, and Mollie and Sadie. But he promised his sisters many beautiful and curious presents, and told his mother that the finest silk dress in the country should be hers when he made his first visit as a sailor lad to his old home.

So, with many promises and many tears, he set out with Mr. Bently for the station. Two minutes after they reached it the cars thundered in, and Joe had just time to say good-by to his father when the train was off, separating him by many a long month and year from the friends and home to which, in the distress of parting, he would gladly have returned.

CHAPTER II.

AN EXCITING JOURNEY.

JOE'S face presented a varied study as the cars sped on. Occasionally it would light up with excitement and joy as the thought came to him that the cherished dream of years was about to be fulfilled, and his imagination pictured the strange and thrilling life on which he was about to enter ; and then a cloud would obscure the light, and a tear would glisten and drop as he thought of his rapidly-receding home with its prized treasures and associations and familiar tasks.

The curious glances of his fellow travellers in the car disturbed the spell of Joe's imaginations. He woke up to his surroundings, and began to look about him. A few seats in front sat a bright-looking girl, with eyes full of fun, who was scanning him every moment or two with a comical expression, and then bending her head, was making quick strokes with a pencil. It occurred to Joe instantly that he had unconsciously been " sitting for his picture " to this merry young artist, and a quick blush came to his cheek. But Joe was neither sentimental nor quick to take offence. Leaving the viva-

cious miss to amuse herself at his expense if she liked, our hero glanced around the car. Gradually the impression was made upon his mind that the men and youth around him were somehow dressed differently from himself, but in what respects he could not at once determine.

He was, indeed, rather oddly attired for a boy of fifteen. His coat was long in the waist, and showed no economy in the skirt. His hat was very wide in the brim and very low in the crown. Its material was fur, but whether beaver, mink, or muskrat, was hard to determine. Had it been turned up at the sides, it would have resembled the comical hats worn by Spanish and Italian priests. His honest large feet were encased in a pair of thick cowhide boots of generous proportions.

This unboyish costume had already excited considerable sly mirth in the car, but the thoughtful observer remarked that behind it all was a splendid physique, a manly, open face, and plenty of fire in the fine, bright eye.

The only dignitaries Joe had ever met were the village minister, the doctor, and a railroad conductor. He was, therefore, a little overawed at first in the presence of so many well-dressed and easy-mannered people ; but the feeling soon passed away. He listened with almost breathless interest to snatches of conversation going on around him. Most of his fellow travellers, he discovered, came from St. John. An old gentleman, with gold spec-

tacles and a great seal hanging from his watch ribbon, sitting just behind him, was telling in a pompous way of a case he had just won in some court. Opposite him a richly-dressed lady was describing a reception in Windsor Castle which she had attended. A loud-speaking, rough-looking man was informing his neighbor that he was going to Dakota to start a cattle ranch, and already had five thousand head of cattle to begin with. While not far from where Joe sat, a clever-appearing boy from Halifax, of about his own age, was talking eagerly about a Cunard steamer on which his father held a position, and he was on his way to New York to join him as an assistant, and he hoped some day to be himself an officer in the employ of that company. "What a wonderful world this must be!" said Joe to himself as he settled back in his seat and began again to picture his own future.

The wonder did not cease as from the car window he noticed the changing scenery. The familiar surroundings of his boyhood — log cabins, zigzag fences, black stumps, vast areas of uncleared wilderness — had given place to the neat white cottages, the fine farms and the cosy towns and villages of the Upper Penobscot. Occasionally the beautiful river would come into view, with its shelving shores and frequent islands and quick vista of some trapper's camp, or the temporary wigwam of some Indian family. Old Mt. Katahdin loomed up in solemn majesty on the far horizon.

With his face turned to the window, and his whole mind feasting on the novel beauties of the changing landscape, Joe did not notice that the seat beside him had been quietly taken, and he was not a little confused when he discovered the fact. A furtive glance revealed to him a stylish young man, in whose smooth face and composed manner nothing sinister appeared—at least to so unsophisticated an observer as our Joe. Presently the stranger opened conversation by politely asking Joe if he knew the name of the village through which they had just passed.

"No, sir," was the reply; "I've never been this way before."

"Ah! this is your first trip away from home. May I inquire where you are going?"

"I am on my way to Boston to ship in the Navy," ingenuously returned Joe, beginning to feel flattered that such an elegant gentleman should take the trouble to talk with him.

"I was bound for Boston myself," said the young man, "but owing to a little misfortune"—and here he lowered his voice to a confidential tone—"I met with in Vanceborough, I shall have to stop over in Bangor. The fact is, I left my wallet on the counter in the restaurant. It contained all the money I took with me, together with my ticket. I happen to know the conductor, and he says I can go on, but I don't care to travel without money. I've telegraphed for the pocketbook to be sent on

by the next train. Still, it's going to embarrass me greatly."

Joe's sympathy was instantly aroused. "Can't I help you?" he inquired. "We are both going to the same place," and he plunged his hand into his pocket.

"Oh! I don't think you have money enough to do me any good," the young man replied deprecatingly. "Nothing under twenty-five dollars would help me out." Then, with a peculiar smile, he added, "Of course, if you have that amount, and can spare it just as well as not, I should esteem it a great favor if you would loan it to me temporarily. My father has a deposit at the Commonwealth Bank in Boston, and when we reach the city, I could return it at once."

Strange to say, twenty-five dollars just represented Joe's financial resources. Eagerly drawing out his purse, he assured his new friend, who seemed reluctant to take the money now that he was sure of getting it, that he would be delighted to let him have it for the sake of his company. The young man had seen Mr. Bently place just that amount in Joe's hand at the depot. After telling Joe several times how grateful he was for the favor, he politely excused himself and withdrew to the smoking car, promising to return in a short time.

Meantime the train stopped at a small station for refreshments. Joe hastened out with the rest, but was so hustled about that when the conductor

shouted, "All aboard!" he had consumed all the time, but nothing else. Moreover, he was penniless. In the restaurant his beneficiary had smiled blandly upon him, and then disappeared in the crowd on the other side of the room.

Joe waited a long time for the return of his agreeable companion, and at last, getting tired, started to find him. He had been sitting in the rear end of the car, and as he walked up the aisle, he observed the conductor just entering the car at the other end. All at once a heavy lurch so threatened to overcome his centre of gravity, that he involuntarily seized hold of the rope running along the car above his head. Down it came with such violence that the engineer quickly reversed the engine and clapped on the air-brakes, bringing the train to so sudden a standstill as to throw everybody forward from their seats.

The conductor was furious. "You stupid block-head! how dared you touch that line? Don't you know that is the bell line? I've a great mind to put you off the train!"

Before Joe could stammer out that he had never been on a car before, and did not know what the rope was for, the official hastened out to give the signal to go ahead again. Mortified at his mishap and by the freely-expressed comments upon his ver-dancy, Joe hurried forward to the smoking-car—only to find that his fine friend was not there, but had, in fact, left the train an hour before.

Then it flashed upon him that he had been swindled, that his smooth-voiced, elegant friend was a villain — and Joe's face burned with anger. He detested knavery and meanness. "The scoundrel," he muttered, as he sank into a vacant seat and brooded over the situation, upbraiding himself for his stupidity. Keener than his regret at the loss of the money was the chagrin at having been imposed upon — cheated. An uneasy suspicion began to rise in his mind towards his fellow travellers. "I wonder if 'all men are liars,' as father used to read in the good book?" he thought. And then his mind flew back to the farm, and a deep, bitter craving to go back began to dominate him — his first twinge of homesickness.

Evening set in. The lamps in the car burned brightly. Conversation gradually ceased. Most of the talkers subsided into attitudes convenient for repose. Joe's spirits had revived, and he began to feel hungry. He thought he would jump off the car at the next station and get something to eat — but how could he pay for it? He was revolving this problem in his mind when suddenly, without an instant's warning, there came a quick succession of bumps followed by a loud crash. Joe was hurled with great force to the side of the car. Several people were piled on top of him, and he was almost suffocated from the weight. Nearly all the lights had been extinguished by the shock, and in the darkness and confusion the people were crying out

quite as much from fright as from injuries received.

Little by little Joe felt the pressure upon him lightened, and in a moment or two he recovered his feet. Finding that he could stand without difficulty, he concluded that he had met with no more serious injury than a few bruises. His next thought was to get out of the car. The forward part was badly wrecked; and the blinds having been put down after the lamps were lighted, made it, from the position of the car, impossible to open any of the windows. Men were tugging at them with all their might, but not one would yield. While Joe was looking about for some means of escape, his eye fell upon an axe in its slings midway the car. Climbing up to it, he wrenched it from its place, and with a few sturdy blows demolished the blind and sash of one of the windows and crawled outside.

* He saw instantly that from some cause the whole train had been thrown from the track. The car in which he had been sitting leaned at an angle of about forty-five degrees and was a hopeless wreck. People from the rear cars, which had not been so badly demolished, were running wildly about in the darkness, not knowing what to do. Joe at once began to cut away the windows to liberate the people of his car, and in a few minutes he had the satisfaction to see, as he thought, the car completely cleared.

Meanwhile a fire had broken out in the baggage

car, and, defying all efforts to extinguish it, was carried by a strong breeze rapidly down the whole train. It had already reached the car of which we have just spoken, when a cry was heard from the interior which appalled everybody. At the same time a lady inquired, in the greatest alarm, "Why, where's Katie?" Somebody had been left in the car, who, up to the present instant, had evidently been insensible. In the bewilderment of the discovery, while the crowd hesitated, Joe sprang forward, and with axe in hand entered the car. The smoke was so thick that he could see nothing, but guided by the cries, he soon came to a poor girl lying on the floor in the middle of the car, tightly wedged in between two broken seats. Though exerting all his strength, he was barely able to throw one seat back; the other was so bent it refused to yield. The smoke was suffocating, and the fire was making alarming headway. The people outside were breathless with excitement as they caught occasional glimpses of Joe tugging at the seats with all his might. Presently they saw the gleam of his axe as the smoke parted a little, heard two sharp strokes, and the next instant a hundred hands were thrust out to receive the girl as Joe lifted her to the window. No sooner had he followed than, as if by magic, the whole car burst into a blaze.

A loud cheer greeted our hero as he dropped to the ground.

"You are a brave boy," said the conductor, as he

gave him a warm shake of the hand. "I am very sorry that I spoke so harshly to such a boy as you."

Joe had to shake hands all around and receive many congratulations. By this time it was ascertained that no one was killed, and that only a few were seriously injured — the girl whom Joe had rescued being among the number. Her foot was badly crushed, and it was feared she might be hurt internally. Joe asked the Halifax boy to join him, and they offered their services to the mother of the young lady. Putting their hands together in the form of a chair, they bore the suffering girl to a farmhouse about a hundred rods away. It was then that Joe discovered that she was the miss to whom he had been such a source of amusement. It was all the same to him, however. He saw that she was not much more than a little girl, and had she been the worst enemy he had in the world, he would have risked his life to save her. As they mutually recognized each other, both blushed deeply — Joe from diffidence, she from regret.

Joe was kept busy nearly the whole night in running to have prescriptions put up and going on messages for wounded people to and from the train, and he proved to be the most serviceable person in the whole company. In the course of the night he found an opportunity to tell the conductor of his misfortune in losing his money. He was very angry that such a thing should have happened on his

train, and said that if Joe had told him before, he would have telegraphed back to Bangor and had the villain arrested.

Our hero did not get much sleep his first night away from home ; but as he lay down towards morning on the haymow of a barn not far from the train, he did not forget to thank his Heavenly Father that his life had been so wonderfully preserved, and he fell into a light slumber, thinking how he would describe his journey to Mollie, and how pleased he would be to add that "all dangers do not belong to the sea."

In the morning he learned that the young lady whom he had rescued wished to see him before he took another train. Her mother had told her of the great risk he had taken in going into the car after her, and she wished to express her gratitude. Joe found her quite cheery and much better. She reached out her hand to Joe and gave him a hearty welcome.

"You are a brave boy," she said impulsively, "and I want to know who you are, and where you are going."

"My name is Joe Bently, and I am on my way to Boston to enlist as an apprentice in the Navy," promptly replied Joe.

"My name is Katie Aston," returned the girl. "I live in Portland. My father is a merchant on Commercial Street. When you get your uniform I want you to send me your picture, so that I can

show my friends the sailor boy who saved my life. Mamma, mayn't I write to Joe, and mayn't he write to me?" inquired she, turning to Mrs. Aston.

"Certainly, my child," said her mother; and Joe had to promise to write and tell her all about his new life.

"One thing more," said Katie, as the tears sprang to her eyes; "I want you to forgive me for making fun of you and drawing your picture in the car. I knew it was wrong, but your suit is so comical," she frankly added.

"Oh, never mind that," said Joe. "I don't care anything about it, and don't you think of it any more."

Joe had gained his point, and had very clearly demonstrated that clothes do not make the man, or the boy either. With a hearty farewell he left his new friend for the train. As he was about to step on board, the conductor placed a sealed envelope in his hand, saying, as he bade him good-by, "Open that at your leisure!"

CHAPTER III.

ENLISTED.

IT was early evening when the train rolled into the brilliantly-lighted depot in Boston. Along the way Joe had been the recipient of many little courtesies from his fellow travellers, many of whom had been on the ill-fated train the day before. But on reaching the end of their journey, they hastened from the car to meet waiting friends, or to seek a conveyance to their homes. The depot seemed alive with people, and as Joe walked up and down in the confusion and listened to the greetings, he realized painfully that his own home was left far behind. In a few moments all had gone but himself and the railroad officials. The train had backed out. The baggage masters were dragging the unclaimed trunks to the baggage room.

Joe felt lonely and friendless. He had torn open the envelope handed to him in the early part of the day by the conductor, and, seeing that it contained money (it proved, afterwards, to contain fifty dollars, with a complimentary note signed by several persons, and a suggestion that the money be used to buy his outfit), had hastily put it back into his

pocket. He had heard the hackmen call out the names of the hotels, but he could not make up his mind which to select.

Still, he must go somewhere ; and he was just on the point of leaving the depot, when a gentleman hastily entered and looked about in a nervous, excited way, as though expecting to find some one. He walked hurriedly down the platform and asked a few questions of the baggage master. Something in his manner detained Joe. He was dressed in a neat-fitting business suit, wore side-whiskers, eye-glasses dangled from a cord in front, a silk-lined summer overcoat hung over his arm, and he had a strange habit of jerking up his right arm and at the same moment contorting his face. This last peculiarity was so grotesque that Joe could hardly help laughing. His face sobered, however, when the gentleman came towards him, and, with great agitation both in manner and speech, inquired,

“ Were you on the Bangor train ? ”

Joe replied that he had come on that train.

“ Do you know anything about the accident yesterday ? ” and the gentleman flung up his right arm and contorted his face. But Joe was so impressed by the evident distress of the stranger, that he scarcely noticed now this peculiarity.

“ I was on that train,” said Joe.

“ Ah ! then you can tell me, I hope, just what I want to know. I have telegraphed in vain. Did you see in the cars a girl about ten years old, with

light curls and blue eyes? There was a woman with her — a servant."

Joe thought for a moment. Yes, he remembered now — remembered distinctly to have seen her. The man read his thoughts at once.

"Is she safe? Was she hurt?" he next asked impatiently, laying his left hand heavily on Joe's shoulder. "Speak!"

"She is safe — all right," Joe replied.

"Thank God!" the man exclaimed; and then he left Joe and walked into the waiting-room evidently to obtain the mastery of his feelings.

Joe stepped out on the street, and was on the point of walking away, when the gentleman returned.

"Are you going home?" he inquired, with the same nervous gesture. "Where do you live? My carriage is here. Won't you oblige me by riding with me?"

"My home is in Maine," said Joe. "I am a stranger here, and trying to find a hotel."

"Come with me, then! Be my guest. You have been of the greatest service to me. Here, Jim!" he called. "Have this young man's baggage sent to the house. If you will give me your checks," he said to Joe, "you shall have no trouble about your luggage."

Joe gave up his check, not without some misgivings, and feeling somewhat doubtful whether his trunk had been among those thrown out before the

car was burned. He yielded to the evident kindness of his new friend, who conducted him to a closed carriage and gave a brief direction to the driver. As the carriage was driven through the streets, the gentleman inquired more particularly about his daughter; and on learning that she had quite escaped serious injury, and had travelled only as far as Portland that day, he appeared satisfied.

The carriage stopped before a lofty brownstone house on a wide street, and Joe found himself shortly in an apartment that bewildered him at first, so princely seemed its splendor. His host, however, put him quite at his ease. An elaborate dinner, a pleasant chat during which he frankly told his history and life-purpose, and then he was conducted to a luxurious chamber. Here he found his trunk, somewhat charred at one end, but its contents untouched by the fire. With a grateful heart he sank to sleep, too tired to recall the strange experiences through which he had thus far passed.

The next morning his host, after breakfast, courteously invited Joe to remain with him a few days and see the city before going on shipboard; but finding that the lad was eager to enter upon his new life, he ordered the carriage, and drove slowly around the principal streets, pointing out the public buildings and business houses, and left him finally at India Wharf, promising to see him again. Here, as he had learned, the boats of the United States Training Ship *Minnesota* landed.

A steam cutter, towing a heavy launch, had just puffed up to the wooden steps which led to the water, and waited the accustomed morning load of recruits. All around Joe stood boys from fourteen to eighteen years of age, with their parents or guardians, earnestly discussing the probability of "getting in," as they termed it.

"All who wish to go on board to be examined for enlistment, will get into the after boat," said the smart-looking midshipman in charge of the steam-cutter.

The boys scrambled in as if it were the last chance they would ever have to board a man-of-war. The order to "shove off" was then given, and the little cutter shot out into the harbor as if she had nothing more than a feather in tow. As she rounded the wharf, the big ship burst into full view, which caused exclamations of astonishment from many of the boys. Her massive hull, glistening with fresh black paint, relieved only by a broad streak of white; the long rows of heavy guns; the tall masts seeming to pierce the sky; the wilderness of ropes and rigging; the sails loosed and hanging in graceful festoons to the yards; the fleet of boats trailing, some astern and some from the long booms projecting from the sides; the marines on guard on the forecastle and gangway — all awoke responsive feelings in the breast of Master Joe as he gazed upon every detail with eyes dilated with wonder.

"See there, Ben, and there!" exclaimed a lady, as she touched her son with a gesture of alarm.

A boy in a neat duck suit, with the name of the ship in gilt letters on his cap ribbon, was dangling from the side in a "boatswain's chair" cleaning the brass rim of an air-port, quite indifferent to the swirling water a few feet below. Another boy had just run out on the boom projecting from the ship's side and dropped — overboard apparently, but no! for he was seen the next moment in one of the boats lounging in the stern-sheets. Before any comments could be made, three piercing, prolonged whistles, followed by the loud order, given on the ship, to "furl sail," was the signal for crowds of boys to swarm through the portholes and over the hammock nettings, and climb upon the broad ladders which converged at the tops of the masts. On the shearpoles they paused, impatient for the order to go aloft; and when it came, away they went like monkeys, racing to see who would reach the tops first.

By this time the boat was at the gangway, and those on board hastened up the long companion-ladder and descended to the deck on the other side. A bridge ran across the deck just abaft the main-mast. On this the captain was standing, and also the executive officer, the next in command. The latter had taken the deck when all hands had been called to furl sail, and still held the trumpet. Each officer wore his appropriate uniform. They were

looking down at the crowd which had just come on board, and the captain remarked, as he left the bridge :

“ Better look those boys over, Mr. Moncrief, and sift out those who are obviously unfit before they go down to the office.”

The executive officer leaned over the rail of the bridge and called to the corporal of the guard on duty at the gangway, who stepped briskly forward and saluted.

“ Pick out the boys who came to ship, form them in a line on the port side of the quarter-deck, and have their friends go below.”

The corporal again saluted and went to his duty. In a few moments a line of boys, some twenty-five in number, were toeing a seam and ready for inspection. The officer came down from the bridge, glanced quickly at the different faces, and then stepped up to an unhappy-looking youth, whose bloated face and beery breath showed signs of recent intoxication.

“ What are you here for ? ” he inquired sharply.

“ I want to ship, sir.”

“ When were you drunk last ? ”

“ I never gets drunk, sir, never ! I takes a glass o' beer 'casionally, an' I thought mebbe it might reform me if ” —

“ You have come to the wrong place,” said the officer sternly. “ This is not a reform school, and we want no drunkards or vicious boys in the ser-

vice. Fall out of the line! Corporal, take this boy to the gangway and send him ashore by the first boat."

"And what led you to come here?" said the officer, turning to a lad whose short stout figure and clean, good face had attracted him.

"My mother is a widow, sir, and I want to help take care of her. I heard you paid boys ten dollars a month over and above their board."

"That will do. I am sorry for your mother, my lad, and it is a proper thing for you to do what you can to support her, but you have come to the wrong place. The law forbids that a cent of your earnings shall go to support any relative. A part of it is needed for outfit and spending money, and the rest is kept on the books for you till your discharge at the age of twenty-one. Fall out!"

The next boy addressed was a terror-stricken lad, who was looking about him as if trying to find a way of escape.

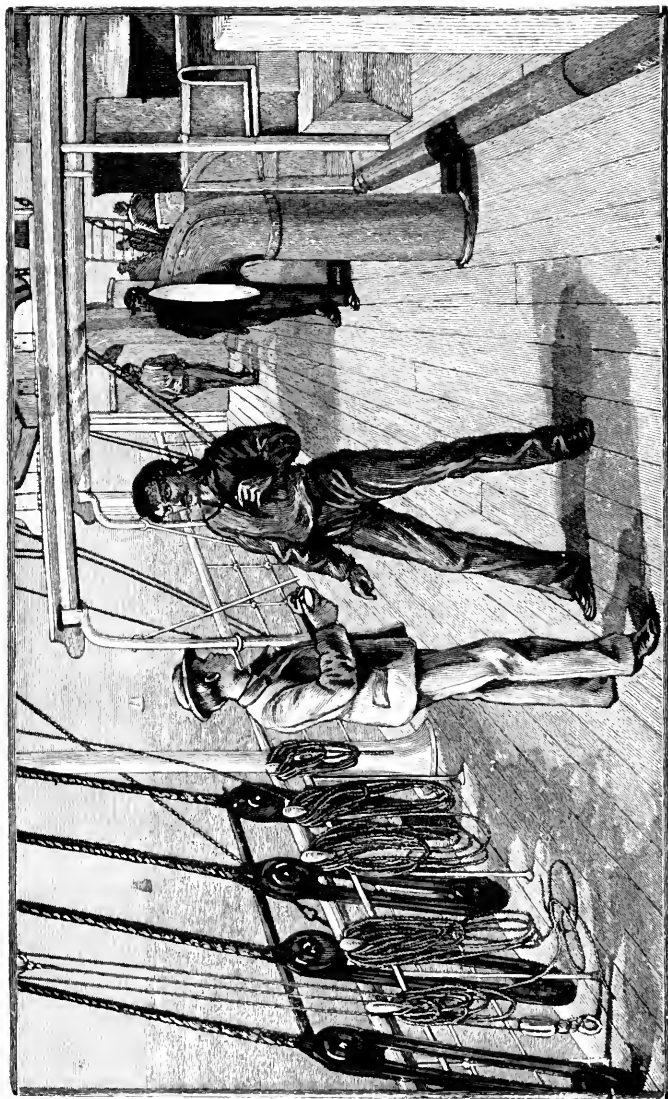
"What brought you here?"

"Father made me come," the boy replied, whimpering.

"Don't you come of your own accord?"

"No, sir. I'd rather be thrashed than come. Father swore he'd put me" —

"That will do. Give my compliments to your father, and tell him this ship is not a penitentiary, but a school — a school for good boys — boys that can be trusted. Do you understand?"



A REJECTED CANDIDATE. "THE USE OF TOBACCO IS FORBIDDEN HERE."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, fall out, then!" and the lad hurried away.

"What do *you* come here for?" the officer next inquired of a pompous-looking little fellow who seemed to want an opportunity to speak.

"To learn to be a sailor and get to be an officer," the boy promptly replied.

"We can do the first for you; we cannot do the second. You have a wrong idea. This ship is to train boys to become sailors. The Naval Academy at Annapolis is the place where boys are trained to be officers."

"But, sir, can't a sailor become an officer?"

"No; not a commissioned officer. You can rise to be a petty officer, a sort of foreman among sailors, and there are a few chances to become warrant officers — a gunner, or boatswain, or sailmaker, or carpenter. These are officers, but not commissioned officers."

The boy, whose sole ambition was to wear a sword and strut in epaulettes, fell out of the line and walked with a dejected air to the gangway.

"What are you working your jaws for?" inquired the officer sternly, stopping in front of a stunted little fellow, a street gamin from a neighboring city.

"Chewin', sir," was the timid reply.

"How dare you bring tobacco on board this ship, where not a boy is allowed to use it? Go to the

spit-kid, yonder, and empty your mouth, and I will talk to you."

The boy standing beside Joe was the next candidate.

"What have you been doing?" was the first question.

"Going to school, sir."

"What books have you been reading lately?"

"A variety, sir; among them the stories of Cooper and Marryatt."

"I thought so. I am afraid your notions are too romantic to suit the life on board this ship. How would you relish chewing hardtack with those fine teeth of yours, and putting those lily fingers in a tar bucket?"

"You can try me," the boy replied, modestly but firmly.

"Very well; you can go to the captain's office."

Joe's turn now came. The officer had observed his fine physique and keen eye, but at the same time he was secretly amused at his rather dazed look and incongruous dress. Joe was evidently excited and somewhat bewildered. Everything was so new and strange to him — the spotless deck, the polished guns, the bright canopy-rails over the hatchways, the binnacles, and wheel, and huge capstan, the dense crowd of boys forward of the mainmast, the officers in glittering uniform abaft it — so many things the uses of which he did not comprehend — that when the executive officer ad-

dressed him, he was more embarrassed and ill at ease than he had ever been before in his life.

"Stand up straight; put your hands down at your sides! There, now, what have you been doing?"

"Farming, sir."

"Did you ever see a ship before, or anything that floats?"

"Nothing but a raft of logs and a skow, sir."

"Never mind the logs and the skow. Did any boy ever give you a good licking?"

Had not Joe discovered from the kindly manner of the officer that he was trying to put him more at his ease by "stirring him up" a little, he might have resented the last question. As it was, he simply smiled, and said, "I rather guess not."

"Do you really want to be a sailor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then you shall have a chance. Messenger, take this boy down to the captain's office."

Joe was conducted to the deck below to the captain's office. Here the clerk looked over the papers which Mr. Bently had signed, and put to Joe several questions as to his previous occupation, motive for enlisting, and his willingness to serve the Government till he was twenty-one, all of which having been answered satisfactorily, an order was made out to the surgeon to examine him as to his physical fitness for the service, and he was conducted by the orderly to a place screened off on the gun deck.

The surgeon bade him strip naked, and then proceeded to search his whole body for any malformation or defect, making notes meanwhile on a blank prepared for the purpose, which blank was sent to the captain's office with the result of the examination.

Having passed the surgeon, Joe was sent to the "schoolroom" on the berth deck — a steerage fitted up as a library — where a board of officers were assembled to inquire into the mental and moral qualifications and aptitude for the service of those applying.

They were just examining the boy who had been chewing tobacco, and his remarkable answers afforded great amusement to all present.

"Who was George Washington?" asked the chaplain, who was the senior member of the board.

"I think he was a spy, sir, in the rebellion," replied the gamin.

"What is the name of the Queen of England?" proposed another member.

"I don't know, sir; but I think her name is Lizzie."

"That will do; we can't take you."

Joe was next called. He was directed to read aloud; to write a sentence; to perform examples in arithmetic; and to reply to a series of questions such as any bright, intelligent boy could readily answer. Inquiries were made as to his moral training and habits, how and where he spent his even-

ings, his religious preferences, and various other things, to all of which Joe's serious and bright answers seemed to please the board very much. Some explanation was made of the general character of life on board ship, the discipline, the restraints, and the length of service, and the question was put to him whether he was willing to accept these conditions.

Of course Joe replied in the affirmative.

And now came the final test — an ordeal which it is impossible for many boys to pass. He was taken on deck to see whether he could go aloft without being dizzy. Joe had run along the ridge-poles of too many barns, and had climbed to the crests of too many pine-trees, to be intimidated by the mast-head of a man-of-war. He ran up the rigging with great agility, as if he had been accustomed to it all his life. In a few moments he appeared on the opposite hammock netting, and swinging himself clear, dropped down upon the deck, the admired of all the recruits who had performed the feat with vastly more difficulty.

"You will do!" exclaimed the officer of the deck. "Take this slip of paper down to the captain's office."

After a brief talk with the captain, Joe signed the shipping articles, and his name was enrolled upon the ship's books as a third-class apprentice boy in the United States Navy.

"That is the finest boy we have ever examined,"

observed the surgeon to the captain as Joe walked away from the office.

“Those Maine boys are splendid young fellows,” replied the captain. “I wish the service was full of them.”

CHAPTER IV.

GETTING HIS BEARINGS.

JOE felt a keen thrill of happiness when he realized that he was actually enlisted. His name was entered on the log as having shipped as a third-class boy at nine dollars and fifty cents per month, to serve until he was twenty-one. After signing the articles, in the executive's office, and having their obligation explained to him, the officer struck a bell. Instantly a lad appeared at the window and saluted.

"Tell Doughty I want to see him."

The boy started away on the run, and soon returned with another boy, short and stout, but with a manly, intelligent look. He removed his cap, and stood with hands at the side in a military and respectful attitude.

"Doughty, this is a new boy. His name is Bently. I turn him over to you. Take him to the ship's-writer and have him put on the watch, quarter and station bill ; then to the master-at-arms for his bag and hammock, number of his mess and outfit. After that, see that he is measured by the tailor, and cropped by the barber. Then take him

all about the ship and explain things to him. Keep him out of mischief, and allow no skylarking. Do you understand?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"That will do, then."

The boys thus dismissed went forward together. It was about ten o'clock in the morning. The great-gun drill was over. On the starboard side a class of a dozen apprentices was gathered around the submarine diving apparatus, listening to instruction. Forward of these another class was busy with problems of navigation.

On the port side the spaces between the guns seemed filled with boys, sitting on benches and divided into sections, each under the care of a schoolmaster. The lesson for the hour was in geography, and Joe noticed, as he walked along, that every facility for teaching was provided — wall maps, dissected maps, globes, atlases, and tables covered with moulding sand. They stopped at the scuttle-butt to get a drink of water, and glanced up at the bulletin-board where various "orders" were placarded.

"Better keep your eye on those, if you want to keep off the report book," remarked Doughty to Joe.

Passing down the forward hatchway to the berth deck, they soon reached the ship's-writer's office, who quickly filled out a ticket for the young recruit, containing his name, rate, the part of the ship

to which he was assigned, his watch number, number of division, gun and mess, and his ship's number. Joe looked at it with a puzzled air.

"Oh, come along, and I will tell you all about it," said Doughty. "You see the ship is all divided up in order to carry on the work, and you are put in the mizzen-top. The captain of that part of the ship will tell you what to do. Then, you are in the port watch, and that's your number. You will find posted up on one of the bulkheads a watch bill. Look on that for your number, and you will find opposite to it just what you are to do in handling sail and so on.

"Then the battery is divided up into so many divisions, with a lieutenant, or some other officer, in charge ; and in each division there are so many guns, and you belong to the crew of Gun Number Eight. When the drum beats to quarters, you are to fall in at that gun.

"This is the number of your mess," he continued, pointing to a chest filled with tin utensils. "You take your scouse here. That is the mess gear, and that table up there between the beams lets down, furnishing as good a place to eat from as you have at home. You'll get to know all about it before long."

The master-at-arms was next sought, and found pacing up and down the berth deck. He was a muscular, determined-looking man, as he needed to be, being chief petty officer of the ship. He

scanned Joe sharply, and was apparently satisfied with his looks, for, turning to a fresh, white hammock, containing a mattress and blankets, he said :

“ This is your hammock. It is charged to you on the paymaster’s accounts ; and,” stepping a few paces forward and touching a hook on one of the cross-beams, “ this is your billet. You swing here. Mind you don’t get spilled the first time you get in. Here, Doughty, sling that hammock, and show this lad how to get into it.”

Doughty brought the hammock, slung it, and then seizing the hooks on the beam midway between the two ends of the hammock, lifted himself and dropped lightly into it with an ease quite surprising to Joe. After one or two attempts, however, he succeeded in “ turning in ” as well as his instructor.

The master-at-arms next proceeded to teach Joe how to “ lash ” his hammock ready for stowing, and then procured from the paymaster the rest of his outfit — a motley collection, including besides clothing, a bar of soap, a jack-knife, a scrubbing-brush, a shoe-brush, a comb, a box of blacking, buttons, silk, needles, etc. Most of these things, after being marked with Joe’s number, were neatly stored in a large black bag, the check for which was given to the young recruit, with the injunction to take good care of it.

Joe was then taken to the ship’s barber, who

quickly despoiled him of all surplus hair, and then to the ship's tailor.

Doughty was now called away for a few moments, and Joe, left to himself, looked out at one of the open ports, and tried to realize where he was. He seemed to be in dreamland. So many things had been told him within the last hour; so many things had happened! He felt of his head to see if any hair was left, looked at his new uniform, fingered his knife lanyard. He was no longer an outsider; he belonged to this beautiful ship. He had joined the Navy, whose glorious deeds and history had grown familiar to him in many an hour of rapturous reading. Soon he would know all about the guns, and masts, and sails, and routine of ship life, and his young heart fairly bounded with joyful anticipation. All this, however, he kept to himself, and when Doughty came back, he inquired with apparent unconcern:

“And now, what am I to do first?”

“Oh, you must knock about and get used to things. I guess you'll break in easy. They won't put you through the regular drills the first few days. Let's see, you must turn out in the morning when all hands are called, lash your hammock and carry it to the nettings. Then you must scrub yourself in a bucket of water. After that the captain of your part of the ship will give you something to do until inspection at seven bells, when we all muster on the spar deck. Then we go to 'formation' at

eight, have prayers and march to breakfast. Then comes 'cleaning bright work,' and 'quarters' at three bells. After that there will be nothing special till hammocks are piped down at sunset, unless they put you into one of the sections for 'setting up.' I'll be near and post you when the time comes."

"But I thought 'setting up' was for a soldier, and I came here to be a sailor," said Joe.

Doughty looked at Joe with surprise.

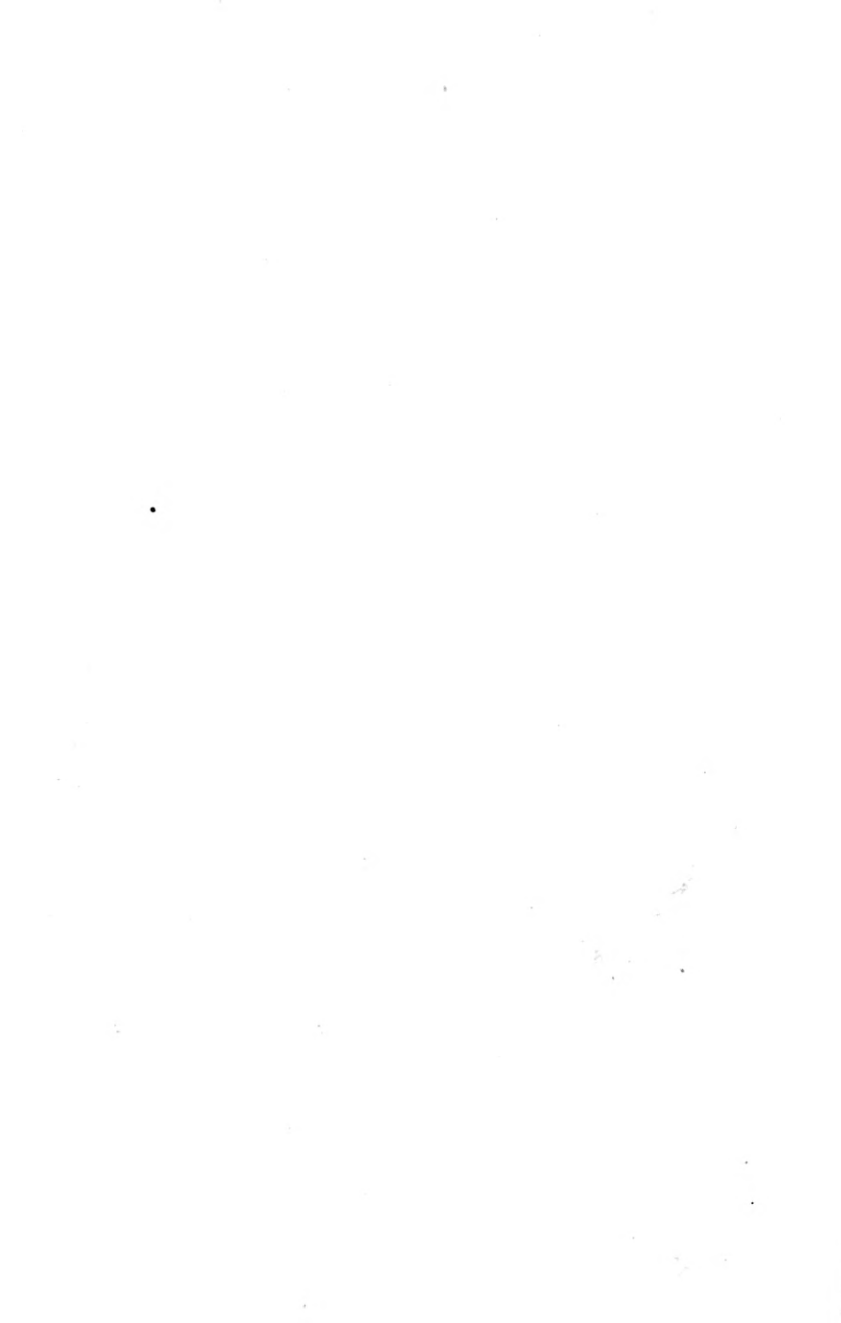
"A sailor! Yes, you've got to learn to be a sailor and no mistake, but there's lots more you've got to learn. I would like to know what you *haven't* got to learn on board this ship? Why, you must be a regular soldier, and march in battalion equal to the best Massachusetts regiments; you must study gunnery and be an artillerist; you must know how to use small arms. They teach you how to fence and box, and row, and swim, and dive in submarine armor, besides regular school studies. You've got to learn to make your own clothes, and mend them, and scrub them, and take care of them, too, so that none are stolen. There's no end to the drilling and teaching here."

Joe opened his eyes in astonishment at this lengthy and voluble catalogue of duties and studies. Doughty smiled, and proposed that they should take a look through the ship.

As they walked aft together, Joe inquired how many boys there were on board; and his friend,



HIS OWN SEAMSTRESS.



leaving him for a moment, stepped down to the ship's-writer's office and borrowed a printed statement of the enlisted men on board at the close of the last week and their respective ratings.

"You see," said Doughty, running his finger down the list, "that we now have on board four hundred and fourteen boys and some sixty seamen and forty marines. Then of the rest, some fifty or sixty are petty officers — boatswain's mates, gunner's mates, sailmaker's mates, quartermasters, coxswain's, machinists, schoolmasters, yeomen, apothecaries, stewards, and so on. In all, the ship's company number six hundred and twenty-two, and that doesn't take in the officers. Some of the petty officers wear sack coats, but most of them dress like the crew and wear badges on their sleeves. There are so many of them that I cannot tell you about them now, but you'll soon learn."

"See here!" said Joe impulsively, turning around to face his companion. "Will you tell me why you don't talk as other boys do? Why are you so particular in your — in your language?"

"Well, the truth is," said Doughty frankly, "I was carefully trained at home. My father was a clergyman and took great pains with me. Then, too, I was a Boston schoolboy for some years, and almost as soon as I came on board they made me a boy instructor."

From that moment the two boys became friendly and confidential. Though Joe's father was

not a clergyman, but a straightforward, honest farmer, the lads found they had much in common.

"You must tell the chaplain who you are," said Doughty. "He is one of the best men, and full of sympathy. You will come under him in studies. He has charge of the schoolmasters. Then he preaches every Sunday, and has a Bible class and an evening service; and he is in charge of the singing school, and gives lectures on week nights on astronomy and other subjects. There he is now, at the cabin door, talking with the captain."

Joe looked eagerly and saw a short, delicately-formed officer in uniform. He wore two stripes of gold lace on his sleeves, and in his shoulder-straps a silver cross glittered.

At this moment several officers came up from the wardroom and gathered in a knot between two of the guns, talking together in a very animated style, on some topic of interest.

"That's a good chance for me to tell you about the officers," said Doughty. "You see some of them have a gold star on their sleeves just above the lace. Those are all line officers, and went through the Naval Academy. They graduate as midshipmen, and are then promoted right up the line as fast as those at the top die off, or are retired from active service at the age of sixty-two. From midshipmen they get to be ensigns, and then masters, and, after that, lieutenants, and lieutenant-commanders, and commanders, and captains, and

commodores, and rear-admirals. The captain is highest in rank on board this ship, and next to him is the executive officer, who is a lieutenant-commander and who has the whole charge of the ship under the captain ; and then comes the navigator, who is a lieutenant, and after him the watch officers, who stand watch on the spar deck in regular succession.

“In the wardroom these officers all room on the starboard side, and in accordance with rank, the one having the highest rank occupying the first room, and so on. Then, on the port side, are the rooms of the staff officers — the chief engineer, who is in charge of the engine and fire-room ; the paymaster, who issues provision and clothing to the crew, and pays off the men and officers ; the surgeon, who takes care of the sick ; the marine officer, in charge of the guard, or ‘ sea soldiers,’ as they are called ; and the chaplain. Besides these, there are assistant surgeons, and assistant engineers. All these staff officers dress in uniform, and have rank corresponding with the line officers. They are all regularly commissioned, being appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

“In addition to the line and staff officers, there are four warrant officers, and they are called — the boatswain, gunner, sailmaker and carpenter. They are not appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, like the commissioned officers, but receive warrants from the Secretary of the Navy.

Their rooms are on the berth deck forward of the steerage and wardroom."

A bugle call, followed by a general stir and movement among the boys, hindered further conversation, and Doughty hastened forward with Joe to put him in his proper place in the "formation" that preceded dinner.

CHAPTER V.

DINNER FORMATION AND POLICE COURT.

FALL in all the boys," rang through the ship, immediately after the bugle call.

At this all the dilatory boys scampered for their gun's crews. The columns, which stretched nearly the whole length of the ship, on both the starboard and port sides, were made up of gun's crews, each crew being in charge of a boy gun-captain. The whole battalion of boys, thus drawn up, made a formidable appearance.

Doughty took Joë to gun's crew, number eight, the one to which he had been assigned, introduced him to its captain, and hastened to his own crew; but not till he had whispered, "Keep your eyes open, and I guess you'll soon get the hang of formation."

A bright-looking apprentice was adjutant. His duty was, to bring the columns into line, to receive reports, and transmit them to the officer of the deck who was standing by, to read out the names of boys appointed to the anchor watches, to announce the names of blacklisters, and to give all commands belonging to the military functions of the formation.

Joe knew no more about military tactics than an inhabitant of the tropics knows about ice-boating, and the only order he fully comprehended was, "Right about face!" He got this wrong, however, and, in facing round the opposite way, he gave the boy next to him such a dig with his elbow that it sent him sprawling out of the ranks.

The boy shot an angry glance at Joe as he fell, as much as to say, "I'll get even with you." The officer in charge, supposing the act had been done in a spirit of mischief or malice, demanded in a sharp tone, "Who did it?"

"I did it, sir," promptly replied Joe. "It was an accident. I struck him with my elbow as I came round."

"See that you face properly next time, and keep your hands at your side," said the officer, who knew that Joe was a new comer.

By carefully watching how the other boys did, Joe got through with the orders "dress" and "front" very well, and was pleased to see how the whole battalion, as by magic, formed into harmonious lines. The only break he could discover was made by a boy standing at his right. This boy was very tall, very awkward, and very green. In the course of their wanderings about the ship, Doughty had pointed him out, and told Joe that his name was Gabriel Butts. Butts stood directly under a heavy beam, which obliged him to stoop; in this manner throwing him out of perpendicular, and thus

marring the symmetry of the line. The trained eye of the officer saw his awkward position, and he at once ordered him to stand erect.

"I can't, sir," said Butts; "this rafter's in the way."

"This what?"

"Rafter, sir," repeated Gabriel, while the boys all around exploded with merriment.

"Silence in the ranks!" shouted the officer. "How long have you been here?" he continued, stepping in front of Gabriel.

"About a month, sir."

"Well, I'll give you till to-morrow morning to learn the difference between a ship and a barn. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," rather sulkily returned Gabriel.

"Muster your crews!" sounded sharply along the lines. At this each gun-captain stepped from the ranks, called over the list of his crew, and fell back into his place.

"Captains, front and centre, march!" The captains now moved one pace to the front, faced quickly about, marched briskly to the centre, and stood drawn up before the adjutant.

"Report!" he commanded.

Saluting as they did so, the captains, in turn, reported the presence of their crews, or the absentees, if there happened to be any.

"Stations, march!"

With the same military precision and decorum,

each captain returned to the ranks. A moment all was silent ; then, the welcome order, "March to dinner !" was passed, and the battalion moved off in squads to the deck below.

When Joe's crew reached the berth deck where dinner was served, he was surprised to see all the boys, who had preceded them, standing in an orderly manner around the tables. Not knowing where his seat was, and desiring to see the boys march up to their places, he quietly fell out, and secured a good point of observation just abaft the mainmast.

Presently all the boys were standing at the tables, and it was so still that the fall of a feather would almost have been heard.

The order "Seats," from the master-at-arms, expelled with a force that almost raised Joe from his feet, brought the whole four hundred boys to the benches set by the tables as though each boy had been a projectile and had slipped out of a shot-rack.

So absorbed was Joe in watching the boys attack the breastwork of "salt horse," which happened to be the ration for the day, that he forgot all about his own dinner. Not until the master-at-arms had called at the top of his voice, "Boy Bently," did he realize the situation ; then he hurried from his temporary hiding-place to find, to his delight, that the master-at-arms had directed that his seat at meal-time should be by the side of Doughty.

"You won't do that again, I reckon," laughed Doughty, as Joe sat down at the table.

Joe saw that while he had been gazing about, somebody had whipped away his dinner.

"You'll have to watch some of these fellows. They'll play all sorts of tricks on you. But I'll fix it for you this time. Here's Commodore Duff. He'll give you all you want."

"Commodore Duff" was the commissary of the boys' messes, and a general favorite with his young beneficiaries. He was as full of generosity and good humor as he was of sea yarns. He was called "Commodore" on account of his pompous bearing, and "Duff" by reason of the frequency with which he furnished the boys with the famous nautical pudding "plum-duff."

"Hello, Commodore," called Doughty. "This new boy has had his dinner stolen; can't you give him some more?"

"I'll see the cook about it," said the commodore in an important but kindly tone, and he rolled on to the galley as grand as an admiral.

"I want you to get acquainted with the commodore," said Doughty. "There's lots of fun in him, and information, too, when he gets going. You just catch him some evening on the forecastle, and make him tell you all about his cruise to Japan as Perry's cook. He'll do it. And how he was Admiral Farragut's steward in the *Hartford*. He'll think you're doing him a kindness if you let him

tell you about waiting on Daniel Webster and Henry Clay at a hotel table when he was a boy in Washington."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the return of the commodore, bringing dinner enough for a small crew of castaways on a desolate island.

"If you find out the boy who stole your dinner," he said, "just let me know, and I'll see that he joins the 'starvation army'."

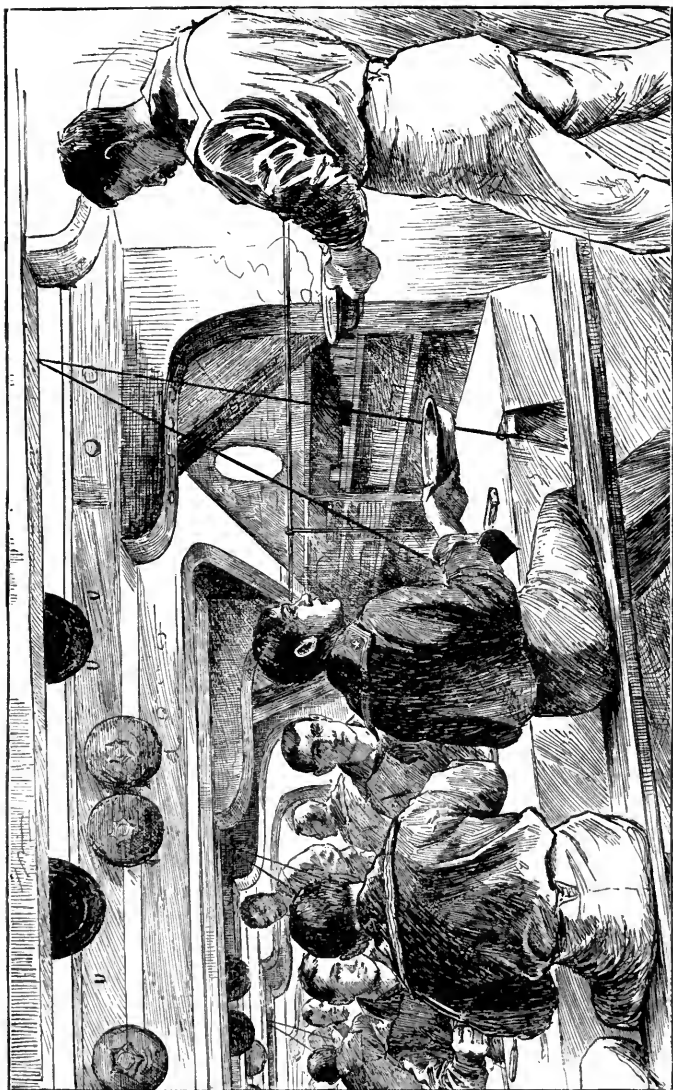
"What's the 'starvation army'?" inquired Joe, as the commodore moved away.

"Oh, it's the bread-and-water squad. They have to toe a seam and dine on hardtack and water."

Joe ate away with great relish, pleased that he had got any dinner at all. He had not more than half finished, however, when a piece of hardtack, carefully aimed, struck him in the ear with such force that he could scarcely keep from crying out with pain.

"That's Tip Herdicks," exclaimed Doughty, catching a glimpse of him as he fell back upon the seat, from which he had risen to take aim. "He's the worst boy in the ship. Now that he has behaved so meanly, I will tell you that he stole your dinner. I thought that he only did it for fun."

Joe looked over to the table from which the missile was sent, and recognized the boy whom he had knocked out of the ranks at formation, and who was now taking further revenge because he had seen the commodore bring Joe a much better dinner



AT MESS.



than the one he had stolen. Joe's first impulse was to leap over the tables and give this boy a severe thrashing, but a second thought restrained him.

"Never speak or act when in anger," had been his mother's oft-repeated injunction, and he remembered it now just in time. But his face was hot and his breath came quickly, and he secretly resolved to keep his eye on Tip Herdicks and show him, if further occasion demanded, that he was quite able to protect himself from any attack.

"Come," said Doughty, observing that the sudden check to Joe's dinner had deprived him of his appetite, "let's go on the gun deck."

He led Joe to a mess chest in front of the executive's office where they could get a good seat, and have an excellent view of the great deck swarming with men and boys.

"What are all those boys doing in that long line?" inquired Joe. "They don't look very happy."

"I shouldn't think they would," returned Doughty, "they're waiting for police court. It is held here by the executive officer every noon. It's time for it to begin now, will you wait and see it?"

"Here, Doughty," called the executive at the same instant, "tell the master-at-arms I'm all ready for 'police-court.'"

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered Doughty as he ran nimbly away.

Presently he returned accompanied by the master-at-arms, and the court immediately opened.

"Boy Dawson," loudly called the master-at-arms as he looked at the first name on his report book.

Dawson came timidly forward, looking as if some terrible stroke of the law was about to fall on him.

"What's the report against boy Dawson?"

"Creating disturbance at evening prayers," read out the master-at-arms.

"What have you to say for yourself?"

"I didn't do it, sir."

"Hands at your side, front! Now look me squarely in the eye, and tell me just what you did do."

"One of the boys had a little whistling monkey. He made him whistle in my ear and I laughed."

"Don't you call that a disturbance?"

"Yes, sir," said Dawson, bursting into tears.

"Well, then, what made you say you didn't do it?"

"I don't know, sir?"

"Divine service is a very solemn and sacred thing on board ship as elsewhere. The laws of the Navy provide that any irreverent or unbecoming behavior during divine service shall be punished as a court-martial may direct. I will pass over your offence this time. Be careful and not let it occur again."

"Boy Munroe," called the master-at-arms, as Dawson retired, evidently congratulating himself on his escape from punishment.

Munroe stepped forward.

"What's the charge against this boy?"

"Caught asleep behind a halyard rack, first watch."

"Guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty, sir."

"Didn't you know that an officer or man found asleep upon his watch would be tried by court-martial, and in time of war be punished by death?"

"No, sir," replied Munroe, looking very much frightened.

"You have been guilty of what would be a very grave offence if you were not a boy, and had not been but a short time in the Navy. I shall give you a light punishment compared with the offence. Anchor watch from twelve to one every night for a week."

"But I didn't mean"—

"About face, march!"

"Gabriel Butts."

"Most likely we'll have some fun now," chuckled Doughty.

Gabriel slouched up with his hands in his pockets.

"Hands out of your pockets," said the executive sharply.

"I will hear the report against Butts."

"Lying to a petty officer," announced the master-at-arms.

"I didn't lie," contradicted Butts. "I wouldn't tell no lie to no officer, sir."

"Didn't you tell the boatswain's mate that that

bundle of rags for cleaning bright work belonged to you, when you know you stole it from Boy Glynn?"

"He ain't no officer," contemptuously exclaimed Gabriel, shooting a withering glance at the petty officer in question, who stood by to verify the charge.

"Silence! How dare you be so disrespectful? A lie is a lie whether you tell it to a petty or a commissioned officer. Bread and water for one week, full ration every alternate day, march," and Gabriel ambled away with a rueful countenance as he contemplated his meagre dietary for the week to come.

"Are you Boy Bently?" inquired the captain's orderly, approaching Joe just as the next case was called.

Receiving an affirmative answer, he said, "The captain wishes to see you in the cabin without delay."

"Some good billet's in the wind for Bently," said Doughty to himself, as Joe followed the orderly into the main-deck cabin.

CHAPTER VI.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

JOE entered the cabin with some degree of trepidation. It had been decorated with curios from different countries, consisting of minerals, bric-à-brac, and articles coming under a variety of other classifications. All these, arranged by some artistic hand, gave the cabin a very striking appearance.

Falling within the scope of Joe's vision were also an immense new compass which had just come on board, and had been suspended over the table, and a giant barometer, set up in an adjacent corner. Each one of these was so curiously constructed that in the worst rolling and pitching of the ship, it would always maintain one position. Before the captain, who was seated at the table, a chart was spread out, suggesting that it might not be very long before the ship would be under sailing orders. The discovery of a sword lying near a cocked hat and epaulettes, completed Joe's hasty, inadvertent survey. He stood in the presence of the captain, very much overawed by appearances around him.

The captain had been conversing with an elderly

gentleman of very prepossessing appearance and kindly manner. The instant Joe stepped in, both the captain and his visitor looked at him as if he were the subject of the interview.

"Bently," said the captain, "this is Mr. —, the president of the Maine Central. He wishes to see you in regard to the accident which occurred on that road the other night. He has told me all about the part you took in it. I must say that I am pleased with his report."

"Glad to make your acquaintance, my good boy," said the president, taking Joe warmly by the hand. "I wish to thank you, in person, for your brave conduct on that disastrous night, and also to get your account of the accident."

Joe was so overcome by the cordiality of this reception that it was several minutes before he regained sufficient self-command to narrate clearly the events of the night in question. He succeeded, however, in giving a very good account, taking care to make as few allusions to himself as possible.

At the conclusion of the story the president thanked him heartily, and remarked that he had a much better idea of it than before. He told the captain that it had been his intention to offer Joe a good situation on the road, but as he had already shipped, it could not be desirable. Besides, he presumed Joe could not accept it, in any event, as he had already become articulated to the Government. Then addressing himself personally to Joe, he said,

"Be a good boy amid the temptations of sailor-life, and always display as manly courage in resisting evil as I feel assured you would do in a sudden tempest or in action should we get into war with a foreign power. Take this pass," he added, quickly filling out a blank, "and when you go on furlough it will carry you through from Boston to your home. Good-by," and he gave Joe another warm shake of the hand.

"That will do, Bently," said the captain. "By the way, as you go out you may say to the executive officer that I would like to see him."

Joe quickly delivered the message, and in a few moments the executive appeared in the cabin.

"I wish you to see, sir," said the captain, "that Boy Bently has every facility for acquiring the ship's routine. Advance him as rapidly as practicable, and report his progress to me every Saturday for a month. You may put him in the gig's crew at once. We want just such boys as he is in the Navy," he added, turning again to his visitor.

While this was passing in the cabin, which, of course, Joe was wholly unconscious of, he resumed his investigations all by himself. Drills were going on all around him; he caught a glimpse of Doughty, who was in the forecastle engaged in sword exercise, and he started for that part of the ship eager to witness the vigorous fencing going on between the sword-master and his friend.

Something now occurred which very nearly

brought everything to a fatal conclusion for our hero, and at the same time our story to a sad end. A loud cry from aloft caused him to glance upward where he saw a huge block, which by some means had become unhooked from an eye-bolt in the topmast cap, descending with frightful velocity directly to the spot on which he stood.

A dozen voices cried, "From under!" Fortunately he heeded the first warning from aloft, and sprang forward just clearing the block by a few inches, which buried its iron hook deep in the pine planking of the deck.

"Didn't you come near making more work for me, though? If that block had spattered you over the deck I should have had the job of scraping you out."

Notwithstanding the shock he had received, Joe looked up, or rather down, at the person who had thus addressed him, wondering at his levity, in the presence of what had been so nearly a fatal accident.

He saw a boy sprawled out upon the deck holding a scraper in his hand, which he leisurely applied to some spots of tar, which had fallen from aloft and marred the smooth white surface of the deck.

"I came very near being struck myself a few days ago," the boy went on. "While I was cleaning the cabin sky-lights a lubber dropped a marline-spike out of the mizzen rigging. It struck the deck within an inch of my toe. Didn't I go for

him, though, when he came down? But I saw you just now come out of the cabin; what did the old man want of you?" propounded he, abruptly changing the subject.

"Who is the old man?" asked Joe.

"Why, where have *you* been that you don't know who the old man is? He's the skipper, of course. We have names for everybody on board a man-of-war, from the captain down to Jack-of-the-dust: You'll have your name among the boys before the day's over. There's the chaplain, we call him 'Holy Joe.' Couldn't get along without our pet names, you know. But what did the old man want of you in the cabin?"

Joe frankly told this loquacious and inquisitive boy the nature of the interview, failing, as he did so, to mark with his unsophisticated eye the keen speculative expression in the countenance of his interlocutor.

"Oh! I see, you're going to be one of the old man's pets. I'm one of them myself," he added ironically. "If you'll come below, sometime, I'll show you the cage he keeps me in most of the time."

"Will you be good enough to tell me your name?" asked Joe, his curiosity thoroughly aroused.

"My name on board ship is Israel Sharp. Ashore it's something else."

"Do you mean to say that your real name isn't Israel Sharp?"

"That's just what I mean. An extra name's as convenient, sometimes, as a night's lodging."

Joe looked at the boy in amazement, scarcely comprehending the suggestiveness of his manner and many of his remarks. Notwithstanding Joe's suspicion had been somewhat excited, there was a strange fascination about the boy, which enabled him, now that the last drop of tar had been scraped out, to take charge of Bently as naturally as an old custodian does of a visitor at Pompeii or the Tower of London.

While Joe was cogitating upon the incongruities of Sharp's character, having reached with his companion the forward hatchway, his attention was momentarily drawn away by the loud voice of an old schoolmaster, acting in the capacity of an auctioneer on the deck below. Followed by Sharp who for some reason did not relinquish his hold upon him, he hurried down, anxious to witness the first auction of his life.

The schoolmaster was perched upon a division tub, and had spread out upon a large round table, with an immense compass painted on the top, the assorted contents of the lucky bag. He was holding aloft a blanket marked in large letters *Abrahamsen*, and was proceeding with a humorous little speech.

"Abrahamsen," he said, "was a lineal descendant of the house of Hapsburgh. He arrived in this country in a very seedy condition. Seeing a favor

able opportunity to become a naval hero, he enlisted as a naval apprentice. After a few short weeks in which he distinguished himself, after the manner of his countrymen, more particularly at the mess-table, he absconded, leaving this valuable souvenir of royalty. What am I offered for this princely coverlet?"

While the bidding was going on, Joe, greatly interested, inquired of Sharp, what the lucky bag was.

"Oh, it's a big bag into which everything is bounced which the master-at-arms finds lying round the decks before inspection, such as towels, socks, brushes, and anything, in fact, that has been forgotten. All that isn't claimed they keep. When the bag is full they auction it off like this. That's my shirt he's holding up now," he continued, glancing up quickly just as the auctioneer had knocked down the blanket, and was soliciting another bid.

"Why don't you claim it if it's yours?"

"I'm too old for that," chuckled Sharp. "I wouldn't toe a seam six hours for half a dozen of them. Besides I'm standing a month's quarantine already for losing my pea-coat."

"Do you mean to say that a boy is punished if any of his things get into the lucky bag?"

"Yes; you've got to toe a seam, or lug a hammock round, or what's almost as bad, clean bright work."

"But how did you lose your pea-coat?"

"Oh, I pawned it."

"Pawned it! What made you pawn it?"

"Want of money, of course. I have extravagant tastes. A dollar a month's spending money isn't enough for a boy of my habits. I'll take you round to Hanover street some day. There's a place there where you can pawn anything from a cap-ribbon to a navy *revolver*," placing strange emphasis on revolver. "There are a good many other places you might like to go to, unless you are one of the goody-goody boys, who keep Bibles in their ditty boxes, and don't dare to turn in without saying their prayers."

Joe discovered the same inquisitive, searching look in Sharp's eyes he had noticed before. He had read enough of his character to know that he had better drop him at once, yet there was something in his glibness and shrewd frankness which held Joe under a kind of spell.

He even experienced a feeling of dread lest Sharp should put him down as a goody-goody boy, and found himself revolving the question whether he could not say his prayers just as acceptably in as out of his hammock.

He had been so much interested in Sharp's observations that the auction had closed without receiving any more of his attention. Boys crowding to the starboard gun-ports, now drew them quickly across the deck to see what was going on. Joe caught a glimpse of two shells shooting through

the water with a velocity he had never seen equalled by the lightest Indian birch. He was getting enthusiastic over the race, when the shrill voice of a woman caused them to turn away quickly from the port.

The voice proceeded from the executive's office, and could be heard all about the after part of the deck.

"I tell you that boy's here," exclaimed the woman with great vehemence.

"But I tell you, madam, he's not here. We don't receive such boys. The only boy who in the slightest degree approaches your description is an orphan. Only last Sunday I allowed him to go ashore to decorate his mother's grave."

"I want to see him," persisted the woman resolutely.

"Messenger boy, tell Alison to come here immediately."

In a few minutes Alison came demurely aft, looking, Joe thought, more hypocritical than bereaved.

"Well, my boy, where did you go the last time you went ashore?"

"I went to decorate my poor mother's grave."

At the first sound of his voice his mother — for it appeared that she held that relation to him — was on her feet. He had no sooner uttered the last word than she sprang out of the office upon him in the greatest apparent rage.

Seizing him by the collar, she ejaculated, "I'll decorate you, you young villain; I'll show you how dead I am." The greatest merriment prevailed all over the deck, for she could be heard fore and aft.

Taking him by the ear, she started to conduct him over the ship's side to a boat in waiting at the gangway, when the executive officer stepped forward and said: "Madam, we cannot permit this boy to leave the ship. When you have proved to our satisfaction that he is your son, we will procure his discharge from the Navy Department, and let you have him."

"But she is my mother," interposed Alison, his whole demeanor suddenly changing in consequence of his detention.

"Go forward," sternly ordered the executive.

"Why didn't you keep your mouth shut?" said Sharp in a low tone, as Alison passed him and Joe. "He sees through it now."

"Sees through what," inquired Joe?

"Why, the attempt to get Alison away from the ship. Couldn't you see that it was a put-up job? Alison wrote that little play himself, but"—Here Sharp was called away for some duty in the after guard, of which he was a member.

In the early evening, when all hands had been piped to hammocks, while the chaplain prayed, as he always did at this time, amid the reverential silence of the whole ship's company, a tear fell from Joe's eye.

He felt that he had done wrong in listening at all to Sharp. With this twinge of conscience came a pang of homesickness as the chaplain asked the divine blessing upon the homes, scattered east and west, north and south, over the vast land, from which the hundreds of sailor lads present had been gathered within the bulwarks of that ship.

CHAPTER VII.

TIP AND JOE COLLIDE.

THE instant prayers were over, the order was given to "serve out," and a dozen or more boys sprang into the nettings and began calling out the numbers of the hammocks so fast that Joe wondered how the owners were able to distinguish them as they came raining down thick as hail-stones into their arms.

He listened intently for his own number, and barely caught it as Tip Herdicks sung out at the top of his voice, 415. Joe instantly responded by answering "Here," and stepped forward to receive it. When Herdicks saw to whom it belonged he flung it at our hero with such malignant force that it struck him full in the breast, and threw him flat upon the deck. Joe was very angry as he picked himself up, and not a little mortified as he heard several of the boys laughing at his misfortune.

Of course he had no opportunity, as he would have had no right, to resent on the quarter-deck such a mean advantage as Herdicks had taken of him. He therefore went below smarting under a sense of wrong, but boylike fully resolved to have

it out with his antagonist the very next time he should give him offense.

He did not brood long over his injury, and his little blaze of resentment soon expired. By the time he had safely slung his hammock he was ready to see, with many agreeable anticipations, what the great ship had in store for him, his first evening on board a man-of-war.

The brilliantly lighted gun-deck drew him away from the berth deck where his hammock swung, and taking a seat on the combings of the engine-room hatch, he was in an excellent position to see what was going on.

Several accordions and violins, under the touch of enthusiastic, if not skilful, performers, were executing a medley of the "Spanish Fandango," the "Sweet Bye and Bye," and other equally incongruous combinations; but all very enlivening to Joe's classically uneducated ear. Presently the whole was lost amid a grand burst from the ship's band, like a child's voice in the ocean's roar.

You, my dear boys and girls, who have been accustomed to good music all your lives, can scarcely appreciate the sensations of a country boy, who hears a fine band for the first time in his life, and with the effect greatly heightened by the flashing of a hundred lights, and the lively movements it awakens among hundreds of susceptible sailor lads. So you will not wonder that Joe sat entranced as the band played piece after piece until the close

of dinner in the officer's messes. Then it burst into a grand galop which set everybody in motion, and seemed to Joe's lively imagination to almost inspire a desire in the big guns to jump down from their carriages and join in. After this spirited conclusion to the music, Joe took a stroll around the deck.

So often had he to stoop in order to pass under the hammocks that it reminded him of creeping under the low limbs of the familiar trees about his home, which, in spite of all this novel life, kept coming into his mind more and more frequently, with the little white cottage they so pleasantly embowered the centre of all.

And how could he save himself a great pang of homesickness, which often comes like a qualm of seasickness, as he came across a boy prone upon the deck, in front of a shell box, on which at a great sacrifice of comfort, he was writing his friends. Then he thought of the anxiety of his dear mother, and Mollie, and Sadie, to get his first letter home. Now for the first time the query arose whether they had not heard of the accident, and were not in great dread lest he had been hurt or killed.

He would have continued along this line of melancholy reflection, had not Doughty, just then, as he stooped to dodge under a hammock, run plump into him, nearly depositing him on deck as Herdicks had done a short time before.

"Why, where have you been?" exclaimed Doughty, vigorously rubbing his head, the part which had come in such sharp contact with Joe. "I've been hunting everywhere for you since I came off messenger watch. I want you to go to singing school with me. Professor Hilton is almost ready to begin."

Joe was delighted to be with Doughty once more. Doughty's duty as messenger boy had deprived him of his society at supper, and with the exception of Sharp, he had not spoken to another boy on board ship. That feeling of loneliness which creeps over us in a strange city, as we have seen, had just now begun to steal over Joe. He was not philosopher enough yet to note the fact that we experience our deepest loneliness in the full and crowded city.

Among the squirrels and rabbits with an occasional deer leaping into view, Joe would have felt perfectly at home — the monotony relieved by drumming partridges, fluttering birds, and all the sweet sounds and pleasant sights with which nature refines the beautiful and congenial homes of the humbler creation. So he turned joyfully away to spend the rest of the evening with his friend.

On the port side of the gun-deck a place for singing school had been "rigged." A white wall of hammocks, which were waiting to be slung in the vacant space, partially enclosed it. A table was set out for the professor's music, covered with a piece of bright bunting, and a fine high Mason and Hamlin's

organ stood just aft of a double row of benches with a very self-conscious look, as much as to say, "I'm the centre of attraction this evening." The professor, a slight, nervous man, stood by the organ, the top of his head about on a level with it — calling the boys to order, about a hundred of whom had gathered aft on the benches.

Several officers sat near by smoking, and the captain, who was frequently present, had come out to see how the boys progressed with a lot of naval songs he had edited, and was about to publish in a book.

Doughty and Joe came along and sat down on one of the front benches.

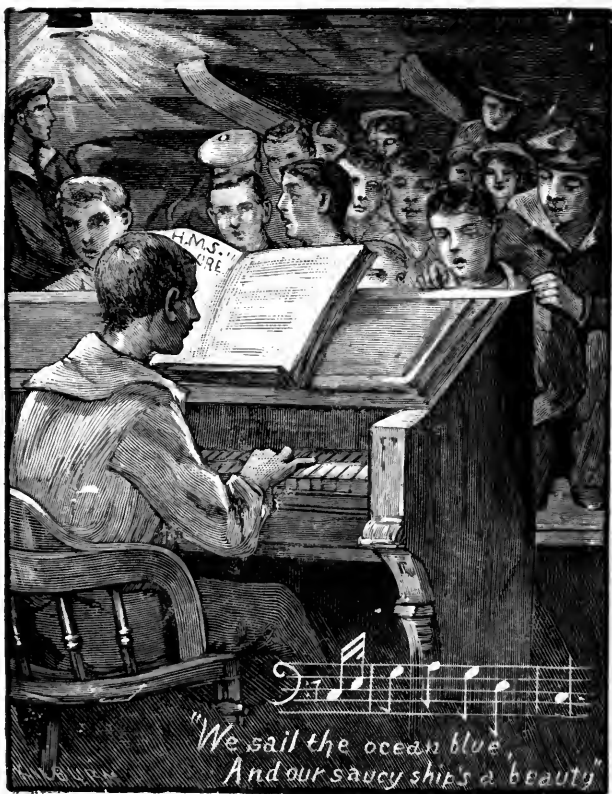
"Can you sing?" whispered Doughty. "If you can he'll be sure to have you up."

Joe hardly knew whether to commit himself or not. To sing before all those officers and boys was appalling to contemplate.

"If Doughty will sing this solo," began the professor, "I would like to have you all join in a rousing chorus. Wake up the ship."

Nothing could help Doughty out of an embarrassing situation, and, with his usual promptitude in emergencies, he stepped in front and sang "Nancy Lee" with thrilling effect. Joe saw men and boys crowding up into the space just forward of the seats that corresponded to an orchestra circle, where they listened with the greatest attention and delight to Doughty's fine voice.

But the chorus was tremendous. The boys sang



GLEE SONGS AFTER DRILL.



with a freedom and energy which they had caught from the old sailors, who want their music to blow in gales and roll in seas that would swamp all the light and classic sounds of the more refined art.

"Are you a singer, Bently?" asked the captain, stepping in front of him.

Joe was horrified, and well nigh stupified as he replied, rising and awkwardly saluting as he did so, "I sing a little, sir."

"Here, professor, try Bently on anything he may happen to know," said the captain.

Poor Joe, overawed by the captain's dignity, so nearly lost his wits that he couldn't think of a thing. The professor suggested one thing after another, and finally hit upon the "Star-Spangled Banner."

With a trembling, but very pure, clear voice he sang, gaining confidence as he went on. He was surprised at the end of the second stanza to see men and boys still crowding up around the benches. He would have stopped, but he was *encored* so heartily that he had to sing it through. Cries of "Give us something else," came from all parts of the crowd, but nothing could induce him to again leave the bench upon which he had dropped, blushing like a schoolgirl.

The captain commended him warmly, and told the professor to put him in the church choir.

The next few songs were patriotic, such as belong to the romance of naval life. They were such as the "Constellation and Insurgente," "The Consti-

tution and the *Guerriere*," and presently came a song which so captivated Master Joe that he forthwith committed it to memory.

The professor divided the boys into watches representing the watches of a man-of-war. Those to the right took the place of the starboard watch, and those on the left that of the port watch. All rising they sang with the exception of a short chorus, alternately the following song entitled —

RULE OF THE ROAD AT SEA.

Starboard Watch. — Two steamships meeting.

Port Watch. — When both side lights I see ahead
I port my helm and show my Red.

Starboard Watch. — Two steamships passing.

Port Watch. — Green to Green, and Red to Red
Perfect safety; go ahead.

Starboard Watch. — Two steamships crossing.

Port Watch. — If to my starboard Red appear,
It is my duty to keep clear,
To act as judgment says is proper,
To port or starboard, back or stop her.

Starboard Watch. — But when upon my port is seen
A steamer's starboard light of Green,
There's less for me to do or say,
The Green is bound to keep away.

All. — All ships must keep a good lookout,
And steamships must stop or go astern if necessary;
Both in safety and in doubt
Always keep a sharp lookout.
In danger with no room to turn
Ease her! Stop her! Go astern!

This song was for the purpose of grounding the boys in very essential points of nautical information. It had not become worn and was sung with great enthusiasm. At the end of the second verse, Joe had caught enough of it to join in with his beautiful tenor which could be clearly distinguished above all the other voices. It was evident that he and Doughty were the leading singers of the ship. After this song there was a rehearsal for church next Sunday morning, then the school broke up.

"Come," said Doughty, "let's go on to the fore-castle and have a good talk before tattoo."

It was a beautiful moonlight evening. The light breeze that had been blowing through the day had died out. The few sail boats in the harbor were as motionless as sleeping swans. A score of little white pulling boats flecked the shining surface. One boat's crew, composed of gentlemen and ladies, were resting on their oars, giving the ship a lively serenade. The shipping, with its larger stays and cordage visible, lay in graceful outlines scattered over the bay, and thrown around all were the city's shadowy walls, the far-away sleeping islands and the sloping shores. Joe, whose moonlight nights had been spent among the unpicturesque scenery of the little clearing about his wilderness home, mounted the starboard cat-head to look at this fine picture and to listen to the serenade.

Doughty jumped upon the bulwark in front of him, and for a long time they stood in a sort of

reverie looking out. Then their reverie was broken by the slouching figure of Gabriel Butts whose shadow fell directly across the line of Doughty's vision. He looked round just in time to see Gabriel skulking down the forward companion ladder with something under his arm.

"Butts is up to something," he remarked. "When he moves that way it means mischief. He's under the influence of a gang of bad boys in the ship, and they put him up to all sorts of things."

"Is Sharp one of the bad boys? I got acquainted with him this afternoon; he was very pleasant," said Joe, feeling his way along.

"Take my advice and let him alone. That's the way he tries all the new boys. He'll be sure to get you into a scrape if he can." Here he dropped his voice very low, "I believe that Sharp is connected in some way—but there goes tattoo, let's turn in."

Unfortunately Joe's billet was on the deck below Doughty's, or he would have probably told him his whole interview with Sharp after they had turned in. Bidding him a reluctant good-night he went down to his hammock on the berth deck.

On board a man-of-war tattoo continues twenty minutes, at the end of which time, or precisely at nine o'clock, all hands must be in their hammocks and all noise must cease.

Joe was a little startled to see that Sharp's hammock was quite near his own and its owner was

seated on a mess chest divesting himself preparatory to getting into it. He had now to pass through one of the greatest ordeals of his life. From earliest childhood never had he gone to bed without first kneeling and repeating the prayers his mother had taught him. Sharp's eye rested full upon him, and for the first time he quailed in the presence of his duty. Only for a moment, however, did he hesitate. Then he drew his little Testament from an inner breast-pocket which his mother had made for him to keep it in, and read by the dim light the last few verses of the sixteenth chapter of Matthew which Mrs. Bently had told him to always read in time of special temptation. Then in full view of Sharp he knelt down and repeated, we must acknowledge in a great tremor, his prayers.

While on his knees he heard several coarse laughs, not from Sharp, however.

Joe climbed to his hammock. The drum stopped beating. The boatswain's mates in a series of shrill whistles piped down, and all was as silent as a forest with not a breath to rustle branch or leaf, and not the tiniest animal to stir the tangles of the dry underbrush. This was the simile that rushed through our hero's mind as he lay down in his hammock. The events of the day came crowding in upon him. Then dozing off the scenes of his brief life changed. He was back in his Aroostook home so weary after the hard day's work that he could scarcely keep himself from falling asleep at family

prayers. All at once he was in his little bed twisting and turning to get into a comfortable position.

It was by trying to accustom himself to the peculiarities of his new sleeping place that his first gentle slumber was disturbed, and he opened his eyes wide upon the unbroken tiers of hammocks. In vain did he try to woo back the sleep which had forsaken him.

He must have been in his hammock an hour or more looking out into the dim light when he was attracted by the stealthy movements of a figure gliding along in stocking feet under the hammocks.

As it emerged into the reflection of a lantern not far off he saw that it was Tip Herdicks. He wondered if he were coming to inflict some injury upon him.

No; he was moving along a line of hammocks some distance from that in which his hung, but all the time coming nearer. Every instant he would stop and look in on the face of a sleeping boy. In a moment he stood at the head of the hammock next his own, occupied by a little fellow named Charlie Smith. Before Joe could leap from his hammock to prevent it, Herdicks drew a knife across the clews, and poor Smith fell to the deck with a heavy thud.

Such an act was too much for Master Joe. While he would only take his own part by being driven into a corner, in defense of a younger boy like Charlie Smith, he would at any time have taken up arms.

When he sprang to the deck, Herdicks caught sight of him and evidently not wishing a collision started forward for the deck above. Joe threw himself into the pursuit with every energy, and, being the nimbler of the two, gained on the coward so that they reached the foot of the companion ladder about the same instant. Finding that his antagonist was closing upon him, and that it was useless to run, Herdicks suddenly turned and tried to surprise Joe by clinching in, and throwing him to the deck. But the liveness and muscular vigor of our hero, he had not counted on. Quick as thought he was himself on his back struggling in vain to relieve himself of the avenging Joe, whose grip was like steel, and whose blood when aroused like fire.

"You coward," exclaimed Joe, and he dealt him a smart blow — "to 'spill' a little boy," and he gave him another. "Why didn't you take a boy of your own size?" — still pounding him. "It's a wonder you didn't try it on me after what you've done to day. You're a cowardly sneak" — continuing to pelt him with no abatement of violence.

He would have pursued his ejaculations, with their very effective and appropriate gestures, had not rough hands been laid upon him. He was presently jerked to his feet with as little ceremony as he had taken Herdicks from his.

"What's all this about?" angrily demanded the officer-of-the-deck. "Fighting the first night you are on board ship. A fine beginning for a new boy.

I must say. I have a mind to send in to the captain and have both of you put in irons."

Joe looked up and saw that it was the master-at-arms who had handled him so roughly. One of the sentries had seized Tip who stood glaring upon him, and using a variety of threatening epithets. Men and boys awakened by the uproar had jumped from their hammocks and stood around most interested spectators.

As soon as he could get breath, Joe told the officer of the deck that he had seen Herdicks spill a little boy named Charlie Smith, which he regarded as so mean an act that he took it up for him.

"Come here, Smith," called the officer of the deck, but Smith did not appear. "Where is the boy? Master-at-arms, go hunt him up."

The master-at-arms released Joe, and went over to Smith's hammock, which was slung on the outer row of hooks, and found the poor boy lying insensible on the deck. Rushing back he said, "Boy Smith is either dead or fainted."

"You and Corporal Glin take him to the sick bay immediately. Haley, run for the surgeon. Sergeant Gorman, place Herdicks under the sentry's charge. Get into your hammocks, every one of you. Bently, turn in," said the officer of the deck, in a quick succession of orders.

Joe could hear the boys whisper all around after he was again in his hammock, "Didn't that new boy wallop Herdicks, though?"

CHAPTER VIII.

JOE PERFORMS A DARING FEAT.

THE loud beating of the drum at reveille, the bugle call succeeding, together with the hoarse voices of the boatswain's mates shouting "All hands! Up all hammocks," blowing their shrill whistles between calls and winding up in a perfect diapason of whistles brought Master Joe to a sitting posture with a great start.

And this was not all. The master-at-arms accompanied by the ship's corporals hurried through the ship shouting in very energetic measures, "Break out! break out!" and stirring up the sleepy heads in a way that would be very trying to young tempers at home, but here, should any ill-nature be shown, would result in calling in the assistance of four hands instead of two in the exercise of "breaking out."

It was some little time before Joe was fully conscious of where he was. It was very late when he fell asleep and he had slept so soundly that his senses were thoroughly benumbed. A little rubbing of the eyes and stretching of the limbs brought back his fugitive knowledge and elasticity and he broke out with the rest.

Suddenly his memory awoke to the events of the past night and he wondered whether Charlie Smith were seriously hurt. He could see his hammock still lying with one end upon the deck, just as it did when Herdicks cut it down. As he thought of his assault upon Herdicks, he was not sorry to realize that it had taken place to avenge a cowardly injury to a smaller boy. Yet he was obliged to admit that his own grievance had imparted pungency to his blows. Then he began to wonder if the affair would get him into trouble.

It was evident that many of the boys were already making a lion of him. He could detect looks of newly awakened interest, and he could not help overhearing many little remarks, complimentary to his muscular activities. Just then the master-at-arms came along and contrary to his usual custom, bade him "Good morning."

Joe inquired after Smith, and learned that it took some time to restore him to consciousness, but with the exception of a bad cut on his head, he was believed to be not much hurt. "Spilling that poor little fellow," the master-at-arms went on, "was a most dastardly thing."

"Do you think what I did will get me into a scrape?" gravely propounded Joe.

"No, I guess not. They're very strict about fighting. You might have told the sentry who it was that spilled Smith, and he could have taken him to the mast. You took the law into your own

hands, but if ever a boy was spoiling for a licking Herdicks was, and I'm glad, for one, that you gave him what he's never had before on this ship, what he deserved. I should like to *skylark* a little with him myself, down on the orlop."

Joe hurried through his toilet. He appeared on deck to stow his hammock with a shining countenance. Though in view of an investigation at the mast, and, perhaps, a court-martial growing out of the affair, this facial radiance was due more to the application of soap than to any exhilaration of spirits.

The bugle call to breakfast formation broke up some very pleasant thoughts of home, awakened by a vision of the old steamer *Katahdin* coming up the bay on her trip from Bangor. With his appetite whetted by the bracing morning air he was prepared to attack the oatmeal and scouse with a vigor equal to that he had often displayed in similar sieges in the great lumber camps of the Upper Penobscot.

The boys, too, were very friendly and sociable. By the time the hands were turned to, Joe had made more acquaintances among them than under ordinary circumstances he would have done in a month. They gathered around him as though he were a bulletin board, giving in big letters, the results of the latest walking-match, or base ball game. He had attained the sudden and enviable distinction of having "licked" the bully of the ship, and, for the moment, he was an object of the most admiring interest.

Presently Doughty came to his relief by bringing him a letter with a message from the executive officer for him to come to his office immediately after quarters.

Wondering, while he looked at the strange superscription, who could have written him a letter so soon, he tore open the seal and read the following concise note :

MASTER JOE BENTLY :

My wife and daughter have told me all about you. I shall be in Boston on Thursday of next week and shall come to see the boy who saved my daughter Katie's life.

Gratefully and cordially,

FRANKLIN ASTON.

Just then the drum beat loudly to quarters. Thrusting the note into his shirt pocket, he started for the primary division, which consisted of some fifty recruits like himself assembled on the port side of the spar deck. He had been told that he would remain in this division just long enough to see that his outfit was complete and to learn to stow his bag. Then he would be transferred to one of the working divisions of the ship.

As much care was bestowed in showing the boys how to dispose of each piece of clothing as would be displayed in exercising them in their various gun's crews. Nothing on board a man-of-war belonging to order or cleanliness is considered too trifling to demand the most careful oversight. Even the ar-



OFF DUTY ON THE SPAR DECK



rangement of a necktie or the blacking of a pair of shoes must be according to rules as fixed as the steering of a ship, or the taking of an observation.

"Bently," said the executive, when Joe finally appeared at his office with many misgivings, "any time to-day you may go to the ship's writer, and tell him to show you your place on the watch, quarters and station bill. You will be in the third division and in the port watch. At fire and general quarters you will soon learn your stations and duties. Tell Schoolmaster Bell to spend the morning with you around the ship. This afternoon you and Doughty may have the dinghy and you can take your first pulling lesson. Be all ready Monday morning to begin work. That will do."

Joe started to hunt up Schoolmaster Bell, surprised that the executive had made no allusion to the fight with Herdicks. He found him painting an immense compass on a huge blackboard. He seemed very willing to go about with Joe, and proved a most affable and intelligent instructor. Dropping little bits of personal history as they went around, Joe gathered that he was an old man-of-war's-man, having entered the Navy as an apprentice in 1840. Many a flogging he had got before it was abolished in the Navy, and he expressed himself as rather sorry that it had been done away with. "If we could only use the 'cat' or a rope's-end on that young scoundrel you pommelled last night, he wouldn't 'spill' any more boys. But

he'll get it. I've seen that boy Smith. He's a very delicate boy, anyway ; I shouldn't be surprised if he doesn't get well. He told me that he had a very queer feeling in his head."

So engrossed with his thoughts about poor Smith was Joe that he found it hard work to give the least attention to what Bell was trying to explain to him as they passed along.

Bower anchor, sheet anchor, booms, gaffs, try-sail-masts, chain pipes, compressors, capstans and five rails passed through his mind in bewildering confusion as Bell pointed out each one and explained its uses. When they came to different kinds of shot and shell, however, Joe's perceptive faculties grew clearer.

"That one painted red," said Bell, "is a schrapnel. I have reason to remember that style of projectile."

"How's that?" inquired Joe.

"Well, one time during the war a party of us was sent out in a torpedo boat to see if we couldn't blow up a Confederate gunboat. She lay almost completely hidden behind a high point of land. We were going to work up to the point without being seen, then by a few smart strokes come round near enough to plant our torpedo. We thought we might then make a run back under shelter of the land, before the enemy should recover from his surprise, if we didn't succeed in blowing him up. Unfortunately we were discovered too soon, and

one of these shells, fired at short range, struck us amid-ships, and all but myself and two others were lost."

"How were you saved?" interrupted Joe.

"We swam to the shore, and though the marines kept peppering at us from the mizzen rigging of the gunboat, we got ashore all right, crawled cautiously through the woods till we arrived opposite our own ship, where we signalled for a boat and were taken off."

"The captain wishes to see Schoolmaster Bell on the poop-deck," said the orderly, stepping forward just as Bell finished his story.

Left to himself Joe went to the spar deck. It being Saturday the boys were allowed to go into the rigging whenever they chose. Hundreds were aloft, many of them performing feats of considerable daring. The captains of the different tops were calling out from below for some of them to come down to do work in their parts of the ship. But man-of-war boys when they get into the rigging on a lark are a good deal like pet canaries which have escaped from their cages to the nearest trees.

There was one very slender boy in the rigging, whose feats of agility and daring drew all eyes upon him. Sharp, who was standing near, told Joe that he was the envy of all the boys because he had once belonged to a circus troop, but having been very cruelly treated, he had been taken out by the State authorities and had been allowed to enlist in

the Navy. His name was Henniman and he went by the name of Little Sol. Little Sol was at that instant on the tip of a yard arm standing on his head. Then he went through a series of trapeze performances startling to behold. Finally in a grand leap, as he used to do in the circus, he laid hold of a halyard and descended gracefully to the deck.

Joe watched Little Sol with delight, and when he struck the deck, he started off himself to take a run up the rigging to the mizzen top. When he reached it, and was quietly taking breath, a shout from below attracted his attention. Looking down, he saw the officer of the deck, pointing aloft, and at the same time, he heard an order to hurry up to the mizzen top-sail yard. Glancing upward, he saw a sight which made his blood run cold.

With one of his feet caught mysteriously in the foot rope of the mizzen top-sail yard, hung, head foremost, at the very end of the yard, a boy who had been overcome by sudden dizziness or epilepsy, and by his struggles was in imminent danger of breaking his hold and falling to the deck, seventy-five feet below.

Quicker than it could be described Joe's nimble feet brought him to the yard. Once there his old presence of mind did not forsake him. He crept out very cautiously lest the added weight should cause the yard to dip or sway. His ready wit stood him in hand now suggesting a remedy, which in

this critical state of affairs doubtless saved the boy's life.

Dangling some two feet out from the yard was a rope which had been left carelessly hanging. It caught our hero's eye just in time to solve the problem. Clinging firmly to the yard with his left hand he stretched out the other, and barely succeeded in working it in with his middle finger to a point where he could grasp it. Quickly seizing it, he cut it off with the knife which was suspended by a lanyard from his neck, and with the piece thus obtained he took several turns around the poor boy's ankle and lashed him securely to the yard. A moment later and the boy broke his hold upon the foot rope, and swung convulsively back and forth.

By this time, Burrows, the captain of the mizzen-top, and Little Sol, had come to his assistance. By means of their united strength, the boy was lifted up and held in a comfortable position over the yard until a sling was rigged below and hauled up to the yard. With some difficulty it was adjusted to the still insensible boy and he was lowered safely to the deck. When Joe descended he saw that the whole ship's company were spectators of the scene.

CHAPTER IX.

JOE'S FIRST SUNDAY ON A MAN-OF-WAR.

WE must confess that Joe seems a vastly different boy as he stands in his division summoned to Sunday morning quarters and inspection, from what he appeared in his backwoods costume a few days ago. Had Katie Aston seen him now, her sense of the ludicrous in his person would not have stimulated her artistic propensities. He looks quite commanding for a boy of fifteen in his neat-fitting, handsome uniform. Tall, straight as an arrow, finely proportioned, and, when not self-conscious, without the slightest awkwardness in his movements, with an honest, manly face, he is a boy who would excite favorable attention and comment anywhere. .

His eyes stood out with wonder at the military display of this morning. The quarters of the day before had impressed him as something very grand, but the proceeding this morning exceeded all his ideas of military show.

In the first place it seemed to him that if the ship had been made of wax, and every boy and officer had been figures of the same material, there could not

have been a greater appearance of neatness, or a more orderly and perfect arrangement of things.

Each gun was a mirror, so highly was it polished, and the deck was so absolutely spotless that Joe looked to see if the dainty paws of the ship's kitten had not soiled it as with perfect indifference to the austerity of the occasion she skimmed over it in a series of antics in front of his division.

Just aft of his division, drawn up across the deck, was the marine guard with the captain of marines in charge in full regimentals leaning lightly upon his sword whose glittering point rested upon the deck.

The executive officer splendid in his gold lace and epaulettes paced up and down the quarter deck. Everything bright about him from the brass tip of his sword-sheath to the gold tassel of his cocked hat fairly dazzled Joe's eyes. Had Joe only known how the executive, at that very moment, was chafing to have the whole business over with, he would not have looked so grand. The navigating officer, no less dignified, stood upon the bridge an image of golden splendor. Forward a succession of cocked hats loomed into view, each one as rigidly set as though its wearer were made of bronze and was waiting to be stood upon an army and navy monument.

The only thing that at all tended to convince Joe that all about him were mortal creatures was a slight encounter between Gabriel Butts and a very

mischievous boy, who, in an endeavor to pull Gabriel's hair was promptly detected and sent below in charge of a corporal.

The cabin door opened and the captain stepped out upon the deck. The marine guard came to a present arms, the executive saluted and all abaft the mainmast raised their hands to their caps in a prolonged salute. The chief engineer, the paymaster and the surgeon now appeared from below, each reporting his department to the executive, who, after the lieutenants and junior lieutenants had done the same by their divisions, transmitted the reports as a whole to the captain.

General inspection succeeded. A signal was given to the band-master and the band struck up an appropriate selection. The captain accompanied by the executive then started on his tour of inspection. Each boy was scrutinized to see that his clothing was in proper condition and his bearing military. Any shabbiness or untidiness was carefully observed and the luckless boy and the officer in charge of his division were each likely to receive a cutting rebuke. At the same time the whole ship was kept under review from bridge to keelson. Any disorderly arrangement of even a pennant's halyards, or the slightest negligence in the care of any part of the ship, invoked the captain's serious displeasure. His aim was to have a model ship, and no detail however trifling was passed over.

Inspection at last being over with the drum beat

retreat. "All boys belonging to the choir will report to Schoolmaster Bell on the port side of the gun-deck," rang along the different decks, called out by the boatswain's mates.

Joe went down for a half-hour's practice before church. While on the way he was met by the apothecary who said that some of the boys in the sick bay had told Smith of the way in which Joe had retaliated upon Herdicks for cutting him down, and Smith wanted to see him. "Come to the sick bay this afternoon, and I will get the surgeon's permission for you to see Smith," he said.

Drawn up in a line by Schoolmaster Bell Joe sang with the other boys under the direction of Professor Hilton, numerous selections from the Hymnal. Two of them were finally chosen for the hymns of the morning. The chants Joe thought very beautiful, he never having heard them before. Just as they finished the second one in the order of service the bugle sounded "formation" and the boys all fell in in their accustomed order.

Joe had been so engaged with the singing that he had not observed the hasty transformation the deck was undergoing. A place had been prepared on the same side of the deck that had been used for singing school. It was partially screened off by means of flags and ensigns and contained room for the whole ship's company. A neat pulpit stood near the organ covered with a handsome flag, and supported vases of beautiful flowers, which the

ladies of one of the city churches had sent on board that morning. Near by was the lectern draped in bunting. Resting upon it were a beautiful Bible and a prayer book which had been presented to the ship by the ladies of St. Paul's Church, Brooklyn. Back of the pulpit and lectern was a semicircle of chairs for the officers, while in front ranged long rows of benches for the boys. A very pretty chapel had been thus improvised, much more picturesque and attractive indeed than any ordinary place of worship ashore.

The crews were all mustered as at other formations. The captains returned to the ranks, the band struck up a sacred march, and the order was given, "March to church!" The boys marched by gun's crews. Each crew was led by its captain, and proceeded a few steps in advance of the one following. As the column began to move, the bell began to toll. The effect was very fine; military order combining with religious solemnity to render the services doubly impressive.

On the spar-deck the colors had been lowered and the church pennant, a large ensign of white bunting, containing an immense blue cross in the Greek form, had been run up to the mizzen peak, and the colors were hauled back to a point just underneath. Arranged in this manner the church flag streamed out, the only ensign ever allowed to float above the stars and stripes. The utmost silence prevailed. No boat was permitted to come

sufficiently near so that the dip of oars or the sound of conversation could disturb the solemnity of divine worship.

When all were seated the chaplain, who had doffed his uniform for a neat clerical suit, came forward and in a deeply reverential tone at once began the service after the Episcopal form. A prayer book was provided for each boy, and with the assistance of Doughty, who sat at his side, Joe was able to follow the chaplain quite well. He was surprised to hear the boys respond heartily and to join in reading those portions set apart for the congregation to read responsively with the minister. The singing of the *Venite*, and the *Jubilate* by the whole four hundred boys was grandly inspiring. In fact Professor Hilton after service said he had never known the boys to sing so well before. While the hymns were being sung Joe could see through the open ports people passing in boats resting upon their oars listening with the greatest apparent attention, and a few with considerable reverence.

Joe was well prepared for the sermon which followed. So deep was his interest in it that he reported it to his mother in his first letter home which he wrote that afternoon. We should be negligent of a very important duty in Master Joe's estimation should we omit to give an abstract of it. We hope it made no deeper impression on Joe than it will upon you, my dear boys and girls, though he heard it under very novel circumstances.

The text was the twelfth verse of the second chapter of Revelation: "And they heard a great voice from Heaven saying unto them, 'Come up higher.'"

"Without stopping to explain the meaning of these words in the connection in which they stand," began the chaplain, "it is clear that they summon the persons addressed to a loftier level. It is above the world that everybody is to rise — its low aims — its vitiated air — its contracted horizon.

"What sailor among you has not felt the charm of being aloft? I do not mean of course at night when the winds are howling, the ship pitching and rolling and the rain or sleet is driving, and wet flapping sails are to be furled or reefed. But to be aloft in the clearness of the early morning, or the softness of the day's decline, when there is only some light work to be done in the tops, or a lookout to be kept. What sailor has not been sensible of the joy of being up — uplifted above the noises and drudgery of the ship, of breathing a more bracing, life-giving air and of being for a while in a wider range of view? Now it is the characteristic of religion, the religion which our Lord came to teach and for which he died — that it elevates a man above his worldly surroundings; uplifts him to a freer, larger sphere of existence — in other words, takes him aloft.

"In the first place it gives him a wider view. On the deck you know your view is contracted.

You can see forward ; you can see aft ; you can see a few miles over the rail upon the water, but if you would enlarge the circle of your sight you go aloft. It is the man at the mast-head who reports the distant sail, or gets the first glimpse of land. Now religion fulfils a similar office. It broadens the view of a man. The Christian has a vastly wider outlook than the worldly man. His horizon is not bounded by time. What a tall mast-head that would be from which a sailor in mid ocean could look east and west and see both shores — the shores of America and those of Europe ! And what a piercing vision — yes, with a range of nearly two thousand miles ! But religion lifts a man to a pinnacle from which he can see two worlds, the world that now is and the world that is to come. No wonder with such a land ahead, with such a celestial commonwealth in view, Saint Paul should say : 'Our conversation is in Heaven.'

"Then again, by elevating him religion gives a man a purer air. The air below is heavy and stagnant. One of the great problems now is how to keep this vital fluid pure. Our recently repaired men-of-war have been fitted with an apparatus by which the air between decks can be kept pure and healthy. There is no odor of the bilge at the mast-head. And so with religion ; it lifts a man above the pestilential odors of the corrupt moral atmosphere of this world into a region where every breath vitalizes and invigorates.

“How delightful to feel one’s self lifted above the engrossing pursuits of merely worldly objects! to dwell above selfishness and sensuality, to ascend from surroundings which tend to suffocate and stifle the good that is in us, to that realm of purer air where we are braced and exhilarated by every inspiration.

“The air aloft is also more transparent. Our astronomers begin to see the importance of building their observatories on hilltops or high table lands. There the stars have a wonderfully increased brilliancy. Religion by elevating a man gives him a standpoint from which he can see things above and below in their proper relations and comparative importance. It not only broadens and clarifies his view, but rectifies his judgment. You might wander the streets of yonder city a life time and not have so correct an idea of the city as you would gain in a few moments from the State House dome or the top of the Monument. What a splendid vantage ground religion gives from which to behold truth in its wide reaching beauty and power.

“But religion says to us constantly, ‘Come up higher.’ She knows earthly things look large to us because we are down upon their level. They get hold of us because they are present with us and close at hand. Our calls, our duties, our pleasures are all immediate and pressing. They claim our attention, they occupy our time, they fill our perspective. Going aloft we get into the clearer air

of truth where reason and judgment can have full play and we see the end of what charms us most below. We behold the shame, degradation, defilement, the loss of God's favor which a life of sensual indulgence brings. We see from our moral pinnacle the movements of the world, its multiplied plans and schemes, its sharp competitions, its unhealthy excitements, its eager concern for what is external, material and perishable ; and weigh all this against those imperishable things which fire cannot destroy, nor floods sweep away nor death even endanger ; weigh the treasures which men heap up but to leave against the treasures laid up in Heaven. As we look out upon the framework of the globe itself, we are reminded that the day cometh when the ' elements shall melt with fervent heat,' the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Oh, it is an invaluable privilege this which religion gives us, this standpoint, this watch tower where we can get away from the disturbing influence of time, and rectify our judgments by calling to our aid the standards of eternity.

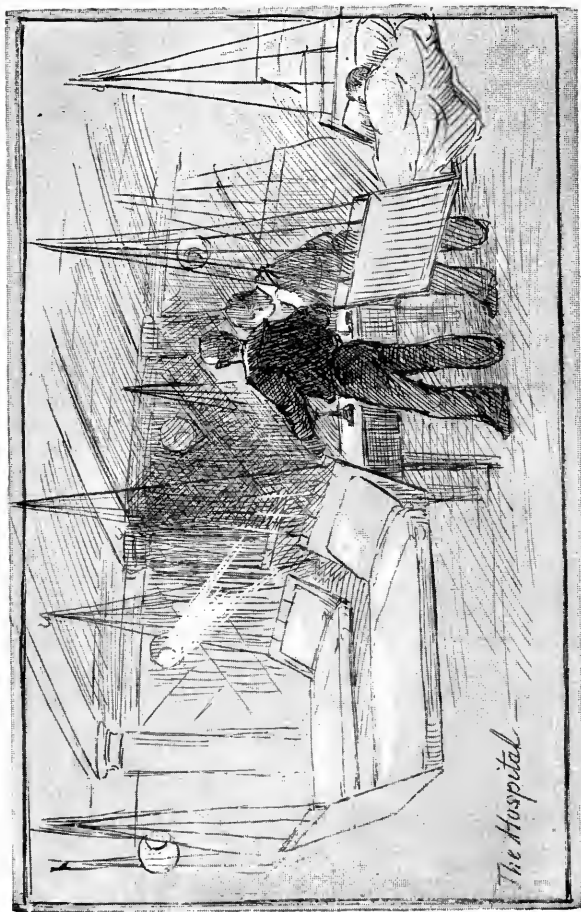
" A party of tourists on a remote mountain side once came across a lonely man in a hut of poverty. He seemed utterly without the conveniences or even the necessities of life, but he had the Book of God. They attempted to console him for his hard lot but he listened in strange silence. When they ceased he simply said with a glow in his cheek and

a look of rapture in his face which they did not soon forget: 'Sirs, I am the son of a king, I am an heir of glory, and when I die angels will carry me from this mean hut to my father's mansion.' Their sympathy had been wasted on him. He lived on the heights. It is our privilege as it was his to obey the summons of the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. 'Come up higher.'"

This sermon was delivered with so much tenderness and fervor that it riveted the attention of every man and boy present. So earnestly had its truths been urged upon the minds of the young auditors that it was several seconds after the chaplain sat down before there was the slightest movement among them; then at a signal from Professor Hilton, they all arose and sang the doxology with ringing voices.

Joe wrote his first letter home. He gave a vivid account of the experiences with which we are already familiar, not omitting for the delectation of Mollie and Sadie, a description of Katie Aston in whom he was daily growing more interested, like the old knights in the ladies who often owed their lives to their gallantry and heroism. He was quite a rapid penman, and he was surprised to see what he had written after an hour of hard work. Then he started on his visit to Charlie Smith.

He found poor Smith in a cot in one corner of the sick bay, which had been screened off for his better accommodation. He was very pale and fee-



CHARLIE IN THE SICK BAY.



ble, but a glad look came into his eyes as Joe's kind face and gentle manner confirmed him in the opinion he had already formed of his hero. Joe was no less pleased with the young sufferer, whose helpless condition deeply touched his sympathy, and whose delicate features and slight frame, added to a very refined way of speaking for a boy, indicated better fortune and gentler blood than belong to the average naval apprentice. Joe told Smith at his request of his encounter with Herdicks, then, as their mutual confidence increased, Joe read a letter from the boy's mother, and, to keep her from worrying, he wrote a short letter which Charlie dictated, giving a brief and cheerful account of the accident.

It was two bells when Joe left the sick bay for supper formation. He promised Smith that he would come in often to see him, and that he would be his amanuensis while he was sick. "I'll cheer you up by reading some nice book to you," he said as he shook hands with him and went out.

But none of his promises, as we shall see, were destined to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER X.

JOE IS INVITED TO MAKE A VISIT.

THE day of Mr. Aston's promised visit came at last. Joe had been thinking about it all the week — dreading it with the natural timidity of a bashful boy. Yet he had looked forward to it with unmistakable pleasure on account of the young girl whose life he was the instrument of saving. To redeem his promise he had already begun a rather shy letter to Katie, and the saloon had been picked out, upon the enthusiastic recommendation of some of the boys, where he was going to have his picture taken the next week.

Meanwhile he had applied himself with great energy to his duties on board ship. He had become quite an expert aloft, had lowered topmasts, loosed, reefed and furled sails. He had studied the sectional map framed on the gun-deck, and knew the different decks with nearly everything on them, from the spar deck to the orlops. The holds had been explored and the location of the bagrooms and storerooms of various kinds had been noted. The ship's tailor, shoemaker, printer, armorer, cook and baker had each been inter-

viewed, and the gunner had given him a peep into the magazine and shell rooms. As he had been put into the signal corps he had made firm friends with the signal quartermaster. Nor had he forgotten Jack-of-the-dust whose odd appellation had thrown an air of comical mystery around its wearer to Master Joe.

Resuming our story, Sharp is now fulfilling his promise. He has taken Joe once more into custody to see the brig, or ship's prison, which is nothing more than a number of cells in the forward part of the berth deck, and Joe is much amused at Sharp's recital of his experiences while a prisoner in its gloomy quarters.

"I suppose they think I don't get anything but bread and water, when I'm in here," he goes on, "but I get as good as there is on board this ship, you bet, and the old man furnishes the grub."

"How's that?" inquired Joe.

"Oh, the captain's cook and I are good friends."

"Does the captain know that his cook sends you things?"

"Well, you are innocent, ain't you! Oh, yes, the captain comes himself, every day, with a white apron on, and a waiter, and hands the stuff in to me through the bars."

Joe would have got very angry had not a mortifying sense of his simplicity quenched his rising wrath.

"But he won't get me in here any more. I'm

going to 'skip' the first time I go ashore, that is, I think I shall," Sharp went on. "I've been quarantined now for a month, and it interferes with my business."

"Business, what business?" Joe ventured to ask.

"I'll introduce you to my partners some day, when we're on liberty," and he gave Joe a significant glance. "But there's Herdicks in that last cell," said he, quickly changing the subject as the sentry came along.

Sure enough there was Herdicks looking straight at Joe from behind the bars. We may be sure there was no look of friendliness in the bold, defiant gaze he fixed upon him. Neither was there a perceptible blink in Joe's organs of vision as he quietly fixed them on the resentful Herdicks in return.

We must not forget to mention that Joe had seen this boy once before since the night of the encounter. There had been an investigation at the mast and Joe's fear that his act might be considered as "assault and battery," under the strict military construction of the law, which had haunted him several days, was set at rest. His testimony was very damaging to Herdicks, and Doughty had overheard the captain remark, after the investigation, that he should report the matter to the Department, and a General Court Martial would be ordered to try Herdicks for his crime, "for," said he, "endangering the life of a sleeping boy, as Herdicks has done, can not be regarded as less than a crime."

The only allusion made to the right or wrong of the affair on Joe's part, was contained in a kind rebuke from the captain administered to him one side.

"Bently," said he, "another time don't be so impetuous, but report the case immediately to the proper authorities, and let justice be done in the usual way. Besides there is danger that such a boy as Herdicks might use his knife in a worse way than cutting the clews of a hammock."

Joe didn't feel very bad over this as he knew the captain said it in the interest of discipline, which must be maintained at any sacrifice.

"You mustn't spake wid the prisoners," said Corporal Shay in true Irish brogue, as Joe addressed a boy named Parker, who for impertinence to his division officer had been placed under the sentry's charge. "It's not permitted. An' what are you here for, Sharp, at all, at all? Ain't ye familiar enough wid the place to give it a wide bairth, when ye're out of it, an' that's very little? What's come over ye the last week that ye hav'n't been in onct? Git out o' here now, an' don't let me see ye agin widin the lingsh o' forty bayonets, till ye come wid the captain's approval, an' that won't be long."

Sharp evidently didn't relish this little monologue and he retorted, "What's the matter with you, Paddy? You'd better hold your clumsy tongue."

The next Joe saw of Sharp, Corporal Shay was helping him, with astonishing celerity, along the deck at the point of his bayonet.

"Take my advice, and have nothing to do with that young scoundrel," the corporal vociferated with a very red face, as Joe quickly passed him to rejoin Sharp.

Joe had already received so much advice of this sort that in the present instance it had no visible effect. The feeling was fast growing on him that he was abundantly able to take care of himself — a peculiarity of naval apprentices after they have been on board ship a week.

"What have you been put in the brig so much for?" inquired Joe, after he had listened to some very pointed and not flattering observations respecting Corporal Shay.

"Well, sometimes when I go ashore, I come back with a little too much beer on board, and it makes me declamatory. Then I'm a firm believer in freedom of speech, since I had to learn the Constitution, and I *sarse* the officers. You may have discerned my fondness for work, and they have to put me in here to keep me from killing myself."

Joe opened his eyes to hear Sharp talk in this half-mystical, and, in his way of putting it, very droll manner. Sharp was, indeed, the brightest and best educated boy on board ship. He was a great mystery, and nobody knew anything about his early life. A man calling himself an uncle had represented himself as the boy's guardian, and signed the necessary papers. This, with Sharp's shrewd answers, upon his examination, and his excellent

education, had secured him easy admission into the Navy. He was, however, quite worthless. He regarded all manual exertion on board ship as drudgery, and he instilled this sentiment into the minds of as many boys as he could influence. He had a remarkable talent for learning, and could acquire knowledge in the shortest possible time, but he did it without the slightest conviction of duty, or anything else other than the mere gratification of personal vanity; for he liked to be thought very clever. He knew the ship thoroughly because he had such quick perceptive faculties that he couldn't help knowing it.

But he was naturally lawless and fearless, without any feeling of responsibility, and he gave the ship's authorities endless trouble; so much so, that the captain had about determined to apply to the Navy Department for his dismissal from the service. A few things had happened, also, which led him to suspect that Sharp was an accomplice of certain parties ashore, whose connection with shipping interests boded no good to the boys. How nearly right he was we shall see farther on.

Joe knew that Sharp was a bad boy, and we may wonder that he permitted such intimacy; but he had thought all along from Sharp's comical and free way of speaking that a good deal of it was put on. Besides, Joe cherished a secret desire that Sharp would try some game on him to see if he could be taken in as easily as he had been in the

railway car. Whenever he thought of that episode he felt deeply chagrined, and he was determined to redeem himself, in his own estimation, at least, if ever the opportunity came. The many hints he had received placed Sharp very much in the same category with his elegant friend of unpleasant memory, though Sharp's method was entirely different. Joe, from pure New England persistency and grit, had resolved to let Sharp have a *try* on him.

As they walked toward the fore-castle, Sharp turned suddenly upon him and said, "I'm going ashore next Sunday, don't you want to go with me?"

"No ; I guess not," replied Joe.

"Why not?" demanded Sharp.

"Well," said Joe slowly, "I promised the chaplain I'd come to Sabbath school. He's taken me into his class, and"—

"Look here, Bently," interrupted Sharp, with a half sneer, "don't tell that to anybody else. You've got a mighty good reputation aboard this ship for pluck, and I don't want the whole crew laughing at you. Sunday school be hanged! So Holy Joe's nabbed you ; you are a ripe one! I never went to Sunday school only in the Reform"—

Here Sharp stopped so abruptly that Joe looked at him in surprise. "Never mind, Bently," he continued, looking somewhat confused, "put your name on the liberty list, Saturday. If you want

to, you can go to church in the afternoon, and then we'll go 'round. You don't want to be cooped up here another week when you can go ashore as well as not."

While Joe, debating in his mind whether his being obliged to remain on board another week (for he was growing very curious to see more of the big city) would be any reason for breaking his promise to the chaplain, he looked aft and saw a gentleman standing with the captain just outside the cabin door. Something told him that it was Mr. Aston, and he turned crimson.

While he was meditating a nice little speech, which, as it turned out, as it usually does, went out of his mind as though shot from an air-gun, the captain called his orderly and sent him after Joe.

The orderly had already caught sight of the boys as they stood conversing leaning against the bows of a great launch which had been hoisted in-board, and in a minute Joe was his most reluctant prisoner. Like most of things, the dread was all in the anticipation. The meeting turned out to be no ordeal at all to Master Joe.

Mr. Aston's manner set him at ease (too much at ease, he feared) the instant he took his hand. The visitor had a jolly face, mild blue eyes, and a smile, and a laugh which set everybody around him smiling and laughing too, though it was often impossible to tell what they were smiling and laughing at. When Joe came up, the captain himself

was on a broad grin, and the officer of the deck, and a quartermaster standing near, had caught the contagion and were almost chuckling aloud. Joe himself was thrown into such a merry mood, that, as he stood with his cap in his hand, he felt that he was almost outraging the proprieties of the occasion by his feelings and expressions of mirthfulness. He had come aft just in time to hear the conclusion of a most comical incident that Mr. Aston was relating, which happened on board a Savannah steamer where he was a passenger, and it threw everybody into such convulsions that when Mr. Aston grasped his hand, Joe was shaking from head to foot.

When equilibrium was restored, Mr. Aston kindly inquired how Joe liked the ship, and how he thought he should like the Navy, and if he intended to rise? "For," said he, "I understand that it is also the purpose of the Government to have the boys enter the merchant service if they wish, at the completion of their naval apprenticeship. If you incline to a seafaring life after you have served the term of your enlistment, as I am a large ship owner, I may be of service to you. But there will be plenty of time to talk about that, as we don't propose to lose the run of you."

Turning to the captain, he said, "I should be very happy, sir, if you would allow this boy to come to Portland for a day or two before you sail to make us a short visit. If he is in debt to the Govern-

ment, knowing your rules, I will become responsible for his obligation."

"He can go, if he wishes, next week," returned the captain.

Joe was horrified at the thought of becoming a guest at Mr. Aston's house, and he stammered that he didn't think that he should be able to go.

"You can do anything in the Navy," laughed Mr. Aston, "if you only have the captain's permission. Here's a return ticket. Our carriage will be at the Eastern Depot next Wednesday evening. Don't fail to come."

"I don't need any ticket, sir," said Joe, giving in to what seemed to be the inevitable; "I've got a pass."

"Very good, keep it, you may have a friend. Feel perfectly free to bring him along with you."

Joe thought of Doughty and what a relief it would be to take him along.

"By the way, keep your eye out for a box which Mrs. Aston and Katie have sent on by express," said Mr. Aston. "No disappointment, Wednesday night. Good-by!" and Joe received another hearty handshake.

CHAPTER XI.

GABRIEL BUTTS AND FIRE QUARTERS.

ALL hands to muster!" "What's that for?" inquired Joe of Little Sol, who sat at his side in the navigation class taking a lesson on the compass, under the instruction of Schoolmaster Bell.

"Hawkeye's going to be drummed out, I guess."

"Who's Hawkeye?"

"That boy that's been round the scuttle butt all the week with the big letters on his back."

Joe had seen the boy referred to every time he had gone to the scuttle butt after a drink. The boy had carried a great placard on his back on which was written in large letters, T H I E F. Joe would have pitied him very much had he not seemed indifferent to any feeling of compassion that might be cherished toward him!

"On deck there, on deck!" roared the boatswain's mate at the boys who were hanging back to see the master-at-arms bring the prisoner from below.

This sent them scampering up the hatchway, especially as the prisoner just then went up too. Little Sol and Joe took their position at the near-

est point of observation — the capstan. The port side of the quarter deck was a solid mass of men and boys, while the starboard side was reserved for the officers who were coming up in "sword and helmet," as they say.

"Keep out of the hammock netting. Come down out of that," sternly ordered the officer of the deck to some new boys who were seeking the loftiest perch like youngsters at a trotting park.

Presently a midshipman came up from below and reported to the officer of the deck that the officers were all up and aft. That gentleman informed the executive officer, who reported to the captain that all was in readiness.

Meanwhile the prisoner at whose expense this assemblage had been called, was brought to the mast by the master-at-arms. Every boy elongated his neck like a crane to get a glimpse of the young culprit who was endeavoring with poor success to return their looks with glances of stolid defiance. He had been caught in the act of stealing twenty dollars from a midshipman's hammock, where it was concealed between the covering and the mattress. He had also been previously guilty of petty thefts. His case had been referred to the Navy Department and an order had come for his dishonorable dismissal from the service.

"Have Boy Hawkins" (the boys called him Hawkeye) "brought aft, sir," said the captain.

Hawkins was marched where he was in full view

of the whole ship's company, and the captain said, "I hold in my hand a letter from the Navy Department which I will read :

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.,

September, 18 —

SIR :

Upon your recommendation, Third Class Boy Hawkins is hereby dishonorably dismissed from the Naval Service of the United States. You will muster him out with the usual ceremonies in such cases.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

_____,
Chief of Bureau of Recruiting and Equipment.

CAPTAIN —, *U. S. Navy,*
Commanding U. S. S. —, BOSTON, MASS.

"My lads," continued the captain, "it is very painful to me to be obliged to deal in this summary manner with this boy. But you are aware that the dignity and safety of the service require that no dishonorable character be allowed to remain in it. Boy Hawkins has forfeited every claim to stay among you, and I send him away regretting only the grief and mortification of his parents, and the bad propensity to which he has so frequently yielded on board this ship, and which can only bring him sorrow and shame. You will proceed, sir," he added, turning to the executive.

The utmost silence prevailed while the ship's tailor with his great shears began cutting away the trimmings from Hawkins's uniform. The cap-rib-

bon containing in beautiful gilt letters the name of his ship first disappeared ; the shirt collar with its neat stripes of white braid was clipped off at the seam ; the wristbands, also, containing stripes of the same material, came off next, and the boy stood bereft of every honorable and distinguishing mark. As he realized his degradation he burst into tears. But the most humiliating of all was the concluding part. He was taken farther aft, where the drummer and fifer stood in waiting, and, at a signal from the executive, he was marched between the master-at-arms and the sergeant of the guard to the port gangway, followed by the satirical music of "The Rogue's March," rendered with great spirit ; for sailors are delighted to run a thief out of a ship. A boat lay at the port gangway into which he was hustled, and quickly pulled to India Wharf where he was landed and allowed to go whither his inclination might lead him.

"Bently," said the corporal as they piped down, "there's a big box come for you. You'll find it just forward of the library."

"Come on, Doughty," exclaimed Joe to his friend, "let's see what's in it."

Joe had already seen several boxes opened, and he anticipated the nature of the contents ; so did Doughty. In a few moments the box lay with its profuse stores spread out just aft of the starboard bag-room. Pies, cake, raspberry jam, a chicken, candy, a basket of peaches, a few volumes of Miss

Yonge's Histories, and carefully wrapped in several thicknesses of paper a fine prayer book with JOE BENTLY printed in beautiful gilt letters upon the cover comprised a general list of the articles. Lying among them was a dainty note in which Mrs. Aston begged that he would accept the few things she had sent as a slight token of the gratitude they cherished towards him.

Joe and Doughty attacked one of the pies. Joe halved it with the knife hanging to his lanyard after the manner of a sailor boy, and they sat on a mess chest devouring it with all the enterprise and equanimity of a pair of squirrels lunching on beach-nuts. The deck was clear and Joe was explaining in a low tone how the box happened to be sent to him, when their attention was attracted the second time by Gabriel Butts who was letting himself down the forward companion ladder with as much apparent caution as he would have descended a thorn-tree.

"There's Butts again," whispered Doughty. "What do you suppose he's up to now?"

Butts carried something in his hand that looked like a wooden spout, or as Joe thought, a case such as he had seen in country stores filled with whips. His stealthy movements excited the boys' suspicions at once.

"What do you suppose he's going to do with that thing?" whispered Doughty. "Keep perfectly still and perhaps he won't see us."

Gabriel descended without observing them, and

turning his back toward them peered fore and aft. He was evidently satisfied that the coast was clear, and stepping over the hatch combing of the forward hold, he slipped quickly from view.

"Now's our time," urged Joe, and the boys crept toward the hold. They had to duck their heads a good deal at first while they stole glimpses at Gabriel. He kept looking at his spout as if in great deliberation and occasionally glanced uneasily up the hatchway. Finally he got back to the boys and stood in the dim light looking more like a big shadow than anything else. He remained stationary another moment apparently in great perplexity, then, diving his hand into the bosom of his shirt, he pulled out a candle which he at once lit by igniting a match on the rough surface of his trousers.

Climbing over a heap of stores he reached down between some boxes lying against the ship's side and fished out what looked to Joe like an enormous cat-tail. He looked at it from end to end in a sort of delighted wonder. Pulling out his knife, he cut into it. He even put the big end into his mouth and bit it. The longer he looked at it the more pleased he seemed. He made such comical gestures and laughed in such a ludicrous way that Joe and Doughty had to hold their hands over their mouths to keep from exploding.

"That's a rocket, I'll bet!" said Doughty in a very faint whisper. "He's going to fire it off, too, sure as you're alive," and Doughty fairly shook as

Gabriel's purpose flashed upon him; "only lookout that he doesn't point it this way."

"Won't it set the ship afire?" seriously returned Joe.

"I guess not; it's too good to not let him do it, any way."

Just in time the boys ducked to escape Gabriel's vision as he advanced to the place where he had left the rocket, for such it proved to be, and one of the slow burning kind.

He placed his rude receptacle between two pork barrels where the overhang of the deck would prevent the rocket from shooting out through the hatchway, and inserted the innocent-looking missile. There was a look of comical bewilderment in his face as he regarded his arrangements. He passed his candle all around as if hunting for the vent of his strange piece, and, finally, with an intensely curious look, he held the candle close to the fuse and the rocket shot off with a tremendous hiss.

If Gabriel had been in doubt before as to what the rocket would do there was no uncertainty now.

The look of astonishment and fright which came into his face cannot be described. He had evidently fancied that the rocket would go off with as little noise as an air-gun and do as little mischief. He was taken aback as much as a boy would be who should jerk at a door bell and pull down the door. He didn't make any noise; his fear seemed

to have paralyzed him ; he stood as motionless as a statue.

Joe and Doughty at this point gave a fortunate laugh which Butts heard above the rocket, and it restored him to his senses.

Meanwhile the rocket was having things its own way. It flew against bulkheads and the ship's side would strike the deck above and glance down, and skim over barrels of beef and pork. It acted like a raving June bug trying to break through a chamber window.

"Catch it by the tail, Butts," sang out Doughty, and, sure enough, he started after it. As it passed him he made a violent lunge and fell flat upon a box of canned tomatoes. He jumped up and attempted to repeat the operation, but this time it changed its tactics and undertook to catch him.

It seemed to have a grudge against him, or an affection for him. It flew all around him ; it jammed up against him ; he threw himself down and it ran over him ; it set his clothes on fire ; it did everything but run plump into him.

Butts didn't mean to be caught by the rocket. He dodged it, ran from it, and at length jumped behind a barricade of barrels singing out "*Fire !*" at the top of his voice and shouting, "I shall be killed, I know I shall."

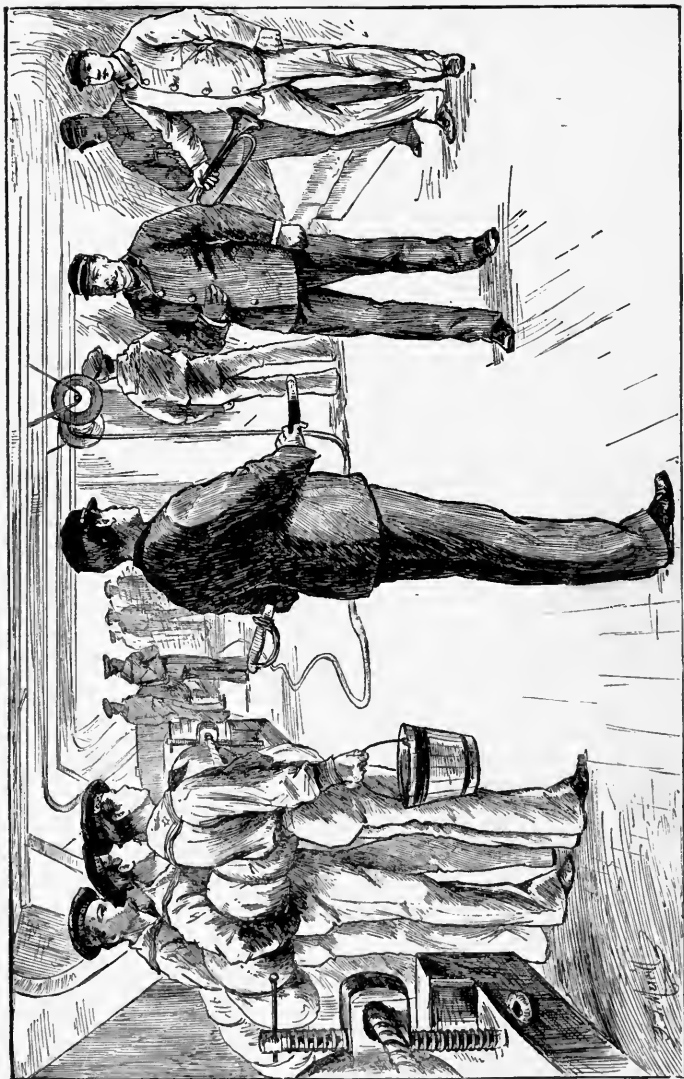
Presently the rocket exploded in a shower of stars, and it was discovered that the hold was on fire in several places.

Some of the spectators, for there were a good many now, had made the discovery before the rocket exploded, and had rushed to the galley to tell the ship's cook, who was now sounding the alarm on the bell.—It is generally the cook's right to ring the fire-bell on board a man-of-war, and he now did it as though destruction was at hand.

The executive officer had rushed for his sword and shouted as he ran along the deck, "Fire in the forward hold!" Every officer and man jumped for his station. The marines sprang for their belts and rifles and hurried to the spar-deck to stand guard over the boats so that in case of a panic nobody could cut them from the davits. The navigating officer took the deck and ordered his men aloft to lower windsails, furl sail and relieve the tops and rigging as much as possible of combustible gear.

The gunner and his gang hastened to the flood-cocks of the magazines and shell-rooms to be ready at an instant's notice to flood them. Hatchways were covered over with gratings which with tarpaulins made them air tight. Every port was closed, every passage and aperture which could let the air below was made tight, and in an incredibly short time the whole ship was put in readiness for fighting the most dangerous fire.

In less than a minute from the first stroke of the bell a flood of water was streaming into the hold. Joe's station was just after the pipeman to drag



MUSTER FOR FIRE QUARTERS.



along hose. He could see poor Gabriel flying around in the smoke trying to put out the fire. The pipeman, shaking with laughter, turned the stream full upon him, and he shot out of the hold like a porpoise from the hollow of a sea.

"Git to your station," roared the master-at-arms, and Butts jerked himself along the deck with an unusual and most ludicrous agility.

It took but a moment to extinguish the fire. The executive officer descended into the hold and finding that the last spark had been drowned out he at once returned to the quarter-deck and reported to the captain.

If Joe was surprised to see the wonderful expedition in getting ready, he was equally astonished at the quick transformation when the order was given to "secure." In a few minutes the ship was completely restored to her accustomed order. The exercise had shown the splendid discipline of the boys in the case of an actual fire.

"Let's hang around the mast," said Doughty to Joe, when order was fully restored, "and see how this thing will end."

In a few moments, as Doughty anticipated, the captain came out of the cabin, and ordered Butts to be brought to the mast.

"Boy Butts," roared the boatswain's mate; "Boy Butts," repeated the other mates on the gun and berth-decks and Butts still dripping from his ducking, and very much wilted, worked his way through

a dense crowd of boys to the ship's tribunal.

"What's this story I hear about your firing off a rocket in the forward hold?" began the captain.

"I didn't know it was a rocket, sir, I never seen one afore."

"How did you know, then, how to touch it off?"

"A feller told me."

"Tell me all that he said."

"He said it was a thing they called a night signal, and if you sot it in a sluice, and touched it with a candle, it would shoot off little stars in purty colors."

"Didn't you know it would go off and set the ship on fire?"

"No, sir. He said the stars wouldn't come sol-montanous or suthin', but would bust open like fire-crackers, and there wouldn't be no blaze."

"What boy told you all this?"

"Boy Hanson, sir."

"That's a lie, sir," spoke up the boy accused.

"Silence," ordered the executive officer. "How dare you speak before the captain calls for you?"

"Where did you get the rocket?"

"I took it out of a chist."

"Signal Quartermaster, how did the signal chest happen to be unlocked?"

"I forgot it one day, sir."

"Quarantine him for a month, sir, for his carelessness," said the captain, turning to the executive.

"The next time you wish to experiment take a

shell or a torpedo, will you?" he said again addressing Gabriel.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the unsophisticated Butts.

"You may take him away from his playthings, sir. Single irons and the forward cell till further orders," the captain concluded to the executive.

CHAPTER XII.

JOE GETS INTO SERIOUS TROUBLE.

JOE'S curiosity to see more of Boston as the week wore away became on Saturday absolute impatience. His good resolution of remaining on board ship all day Sunday deserted him when the boys went to have their names put on the liberty list, and his name went down with the rest. He went to the chaplain, however, and asked if he might not be excused from Sunday school. The chaplain kindly advised him to remain on board, but seeing that he was bent on going told him that he would like for him to attend church at Tremont Temple, and Joe promised that he would.

Sunday afternoon Sharp and Joe perched upon the starboard gunwale of the third cutter, looking as spick and span as naval apprentices always do on Sunday, were towed to India Wharf and found their way with a large battalion of boys to the Common, where they respectively dispersed like a bunch of steel shavings drawn apart by a ring of magnets.

Doughty had also come ashore, and had taken a car for the Highlands to spend the afternoon with his friends. He had courteously invited Joe to ac-

company him, but Joe thought he had better decline. Presently Joe found that all the boys had scattered, leaving Sharp and himself alone by the large fountain just below the State House.

"Let's sit down here where we can see what's going on," proposed Sharp, and they dropped upon a seat in the shade of an old elm, which was very grateful to them, for the day was quite warm.

"Isn't this a good deal better than to be shut up all day in an old ballyhoo?" began Sharp. "I'll tell you what it is, Bently, if it wasn't for one thing I'd 'skin out' to-day."

"What's that?" asked Joe.

"It's rather important to a boy who doesn't like to work — board and lodging. But I know one thing I could do — I could go to sea in a merchant-man. Look here, Bently," continued he, bringing his hand hard down upon Joe's shoulder as though it were a tiller, "I know a captain who wants two boys. If you'll go with me we'll ship this afternoon. He sails for Barcelona next week. Barcelona, you know, is in Spain. We'll see bullfights, and have lots of fun. I've been there, and Spain's a gay country. It would take me all day to tell you what we'd see."

Joe looked up in amazement. He was very indignant that Sharp should make such a proposition to him, and he wondered what he had done which in any way had led to such a proposal. Then he thought with his usual charity that it might be be-

cause Sharp had taken a liking to him, and wanted his companionship.

"I've got a good many boys to go into the merchant service," Sharp resumed, "but the business' been dull lately. The old man's got his eye on me, and I've a good mind to go myself now. But I want some smart boy to keep me company," dwelling on smart with flattering emphasis.

"You can't have me," returned Joe with a positiveness which made Sharp start from his seat. "I don't want to go, and if I did I wouldn't go with you" —

"What do you mean?" demanded Sharp, growing very red in the face.

"I mean just what I say. If that's your business you've been talking about, you must be a very bad boy, and I'll tell the captain."

"If you say any more, I'll lick you," angrily declared Sharp, striking a menacing attitude before Joe.

"All right," exclaimed Joe, springing to his feet, and forgetting all about Sunday.

Sharp knew better than to attempt the execution of his threat. Joe's recent encounter with Tip Herdicks had had its due effect upon Sharp, and just as he was cogitating some shrewd way of getting out of the present difficulty, without appearing cowardly to Joe, a lady teacher of the Park Street Sunday school came along. Observing the hostile attitude of the boys, and knowing they were young

apprentices, from their uniform, but taking no apparent notice of their demeanor, she spoke very pleasantly to them and invited them to go to Sunday school with her. Joe politely removed his cap, and begged her pardon for being found in such an unbecoming situation, and told her that he would be pleased to accompany her, only he had promised the chaplain of the ship that he would attend church at Tremont Temple. The lady having succeeded in quelling hostilities passed on.

No sooner was she out of the way than Sharp with an unaccountable change of manner, stretched out his hand to Joe and said, "I beg your pardon, Bently. You're the kind of a boy I like. To tell you the truth, I have got discouraged in the Navy, and that's what made me ask you to run away with me. As for the boys I spoke of, they would have "jumped" any way, and I got them chances through my uncle. He's a shipping master, and you can't blame a fellow for turning business into his own family."

Sharp's instantaneous change of manner threw Joe off his guard, for he did not appreciate the chameleon-like power in Sharp's character to change as circumstances might require. He rather reluctantly took Sharp's hand, and thought that perhaps he had been a little hasty. And Sharp's apologies became so warm and excessive that it was not long before Joe began to feel that he had wronged him. While they strolled down the Beacon street mall,

he so amused Joe with his quaint observations on people and things as they passed along, that by the time they had returned to join the great crowd thronging into Tremont Temple, Joe had been brought round to the best of feeling, and had quite forgotten the little episode on the Common.

Not so with Sharp. He felt that he had imperilled his plans and also his person by exciting Joe's suspicion and enmity. He had every reason to believe that Joe had a very decided character, and also that being a country boy he could be very easily taken in. Not daring to trust himself on board ship again with Joe he rapidly conceived a plan which, in fact, had been taking shape for some time in his mind, of disposing of Joe to his own pecuniary advantage. While Joe sat listening with delight to music from a fine quartette, Sharp was perfecting his arrangements to dispose of Joe as he had of several other boys who were, on that very day, bound on long voyages with tyrannical captains and savage mates, repenting their acquaintance and familiarity with Israel Sharp.

While the collection was being taken, Sharp whispered to Joe that he wanted to run down to his uncle's before they went on board, and asked him if he would not like to go with him. Joe willingly assented, simply remarking that they would not have but a few moments to stay. He then turned to listen to the speakers.

The meeting proved to be a very stirring one.

It was a Temperance mass meeting, and Joe without knowing who the speakers were, listened with delight to Gough, Mrs. Livermore, Wendell Phillips and others. He was also greatly awed by the vast audience, and the music which rolled out from the immense organ upon the platform. Finally a charming Christian Temperance song from the quartette concluded the service, and Joe went out feeling that he would be the strongest kind of a temperance boy.

As they passed along Tremont Row into Court Street, making their way into rather disreputable localities, Joe was surprised to see little shops open where all kinds of liquors were freely passed over the bars. Faint clicks, and occasionally a prolonged roll, catching his ear, he inquired of Sharp what the noises were.

"Bowling alleys and billiard halls," was the laconic answer. "Wouldn't you like to see one of the billiard halls? I know a very handsome one. I guess we can get in."

Joe demurred against visiting such a place on Sunday, but Sharp persisted and he so far yielded as to say he would go to the head of the stairs. Sharp led him through several short streets, and at length came to a small door, which was unlocked, and opened by a back way into a large billiard saloon. At the head of the stairs which the boys had to climb, Sharp opened another small door, and Joe looked into a hall the most sumptuous and elegant

of any place he had ever seen. The ceiling was covered with pictures, and the walls to Joe's in-artistic eye seemed richly frescoed. Chandeliers containing great numbers of crystal pendants threw a dazzling splendor over the table, for, though it was in the daytime, the blinds were all closed and the gas lighted. At one end was a bar covered with glasses of many different shades, at which men and boys were drinking.

"I'm going," said Joe with emphasis, his conscience getting the better of his curiosity.

Without a word of remonstrance Sharp followed him down stairs. As they walked along Sharp made himself unusually agreeable. He seemed to be well acquainted too. He nodded to rough-looking men, winked at stable boys, and seemed to be in the neighborhood where he had lived all his life. Threading their way along by a circuitous route which Joe did not notice (who could, in Boston?) they came at length to a dark-looking street near the water. Down this street Sharp turned and presently began to climb a stairway followed by the unsuspecting Joe.

A sharp knock which had to be repeated several times brought a rough-looking man dressed in sailor coat and trousers very tarry to the door. Sharp introduced him to Joe as his Uncle Peters. "They say we look a good deal alike," he said with a grin, which meant, the way he said it, that they looked as unlike as possible. This remark caused

Joe to notice Sharp's uncle more particularly. He was struck with the enormous size of his nose, especially at the end, and its extreme fiery appearance. He would have known what all this meant had he been accustomed to the sight of those habituated to the use of intoxicating drinks. But he thought the enlargement due to nature, or that its owner had met with some accident. His eyes were as red as his nose, and in nowise benevolent. He wore large brass earrings, which Joe, never having seen in masculine ears before, thought to be extremely comical.

However, Uncle Peters gave the boys a cordial invitation to enter, and was particularly civil and attentive to Joe. They passed in through a long, narrow entry very much worn, though not with the scrubbing brush, and with walls appearing as though they had been frequently "slushed down." At the farther end of the entry a dirty door was opened, and Joe was led into the family kitchen, bedroom and sitting-room, all in one. Sharp's Aunt Peters sat near the one window of this apartment mending a sock very much in ruins.

If Sharp's Uncle Peters was unprepossessing his Aunt Peters was much more so. There was the same look of general inebriety and dilapidation that her husband had. But while he seemed to have increased in size under it, she seemed to have dwindled. She was very small, very much wrinkled and very yellow. One of her eyes drooped while

the other appeared to be looking upward. When she arose to shake hands with Joe it was with the suddenness of a jumping-jack, while her eyes seemed to rake him fore and aft. She gave him the only rocking-chair in the room, which shrieked when he sat in it as though it had an exposed nerve and that tender filament had been brought in violent collision with a piece of bone. From the appearance of her garments, and the looks of the room, any one familiar with city occupations would have pronounced her a ragpicker. Whatever work she did it was evidently not in the line of house-keeping. The bed standing in one corner, the old-fashioned dresser with its fragments of crockery, and the broken stove, all showed the negligence of many years.

Hanging against the wall were several old suits, and among them an apprentice boy's uniform. How in the world that could have come there was a poser to Joe. Sharp noticed his perplexed look, and explained that it belonged to him. He had left it some time previous for his Aunt Peters to mend.

Joe thought they all three looked a little strange as Sharp said this, still his suspicions were not excited. He only thought Israel was very unfortunate in his relatives, and felt if they had belonged to him he would not have invited any of his friends to pay them a visit. They engaged Joe in conversation, apologizing for the appearance of things, saying that they hadn't expected Israel off at that

time or they would have been brushed up. How any amount of brushing could have made any improvement Joe's inventive mind could not discover. He sat listening impatiently to the talk they were trying to keep up, longing for a breath of fresh air, when Sharp's aunt told Peters to bring in some beer.

"Do you like lager?" she said, fixing her uneven eyes on Joe.

"No, I thank you," returned Joe, "I don't drink beer."

"I'll take lager," said Sharp, "and Bently will have some ginger-pop."

Joe declined again, but Peters went to the dresser and took out a waiter which looked as if it might have served for a stove hearth before it became a tray. With this waiter he took down four very dirty glasses. He fumbled about a moment after a corkscrew with which he proceeded to open bottles which were stored at the bottom of the dresser. The corks came out with an expulsive force that made Aunt Peters's eyes snap. The stopper to the ginger-pop having a more active if less powerful agent behind it flew across the room grazing the cheek of Aunt Peters, which created a smile all round.

Sharp asked Joe to look at the picture of an old man-of-war hanging in a dark corner, on which his uncle had once served as a boatswain's mate. While Joe was tracing out the lines of a very dumpish-

looking craft, could he have glanced toward the dresser he would have seen Peters hastily turn something into the glass intended for him which would have thoroughly excited his fears.

Presently returning to their seats Peters came up with the waiter. Joe had been allowed to drink ginger-pop on the Fourth of July in the Aroostook, but he decidedly objected to drinking it under the present circumstances. However, he excused himself for drinking it now on the ground of politeness — very poor ground indeed for a temperance boy to take when associated with those addicted to drinking. Against his better judgment, as well as his conscience, Joe drank his ginger-pop, while the others tossed off the lager with great relish. He thought it had a very different flavor from any he had ever tasted before, but it was only a passing thought.

He saw by the appearance of the sky that it was within a half-hour of sunset, and the orders were for all the boys to be at the wharf at sundown. He looked at Sharp impatiently, who appeared in no hurry to start. It was not more than ten minutes after he drank the beer before he began to experience a strange feeling creeping over him, accompanied by drowsiness. His eyes began to blink, and he felt an unusual disinclination to talk or make any exertion. He tried, without being observed, to rouse himself, but his lethargy kept increasing and he grew more and more bewildered. He saw

Peters and Sharp smiling at each other, and could faintly distinguish the purport of a conversation going on between them.

"We've got him safe," Peters remarked with a chuckle. "Don't be so long in gittin' the next one here. You haven't done much lately."

"I've been afraid," returned Sharp. "The old man's got wind of something. You'll get a good deal for him. Mighty smart boy, and plucky, too. If you don't look out, when he wakes up you'll have your hands full. I'm rather sorry for him, but business is business."

"I've got a ship all picked out," said Peters ; "she sails to-morrow for Tangier. I'll go round after Bill and we'll take him on board to-night."

These were the last words our hero had the faintest appreciation of as he sank under the influence of a powerful opiate into a heavy slumber.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHARP IN DOUBLE IRONS.

A SHARP ring from the cabin sent the orderly post-haste in to the captain.

"Orderly," said he, "ask the officer of the deck if the boys have all returned from liberty."

Presently the orderly came back and reported that the boys had all returned with the exception of Bently.

"Tell the executive officer I wish to see him immediately in the cabin."

"Do you know any reason, sir," said the captain when the executive had reported, "why Boy Bently should be out of the ship at this hour? you could not have given him permission to stay away over night."

"I told him distinctly to be at the wharf for the sundown boat. He may have been left. We can find out from some of the boys. Shall I send for Doughty, sir? I think he and Bently are the most together."

The captain assented, and in a few minutes Doughty appeared, cap in hand.

"Were you with Boy Bently this afternoon, Doughty?" inquired the captain.

"Only as we walked up to the Common, sir. I went out to the Highlands to see my aunt. I left Bently standing with Hanson and Sharp on Park Street corner."

Hanson confirmed Doughty's statement, and added that the last he saw of Bently he was walking with Sharp up the Common in the direction of the State House.

Doughty and Hanson being dismissed, Sharp was next summoned. A slight uneasiness was observable in Sharp's manner as he entered the cabin, but when he confronted the executive and the captain he was quite self-possessed.

"Were you with Boy Bently this afternoon?" began the captain, fixing his eye upon Sharp.

"Yes, sir; the first part of the afternoon."

"Where did you leave him?"

"I left him on the Beacon street mall."

"Say sir, when you address the captain," interrupted the executive officer.

"Ay, ay, sir," returned Sharp, with illy concealed resentment.

"Tell me what you did with Boy Bently," demanded the captain in a very decided tone.

"I didn't do anything with him, sir," Sharp replied, slightly quailing under the captain's piercing eye. "The last I saw of him he was going up Joy street."

"You just said you left him on the Beacon street mall."

"So I did, sir, but he started up Joy'street as I came away; he said he was going somewhere to get a glass of beer. I wouldn't go with him because I don't drink — now."

Sharp just saved himself by the use of this little adverb — now; for the captain and the executive smiled as they thought of the times Sharp had been put in the brig on account of his having returned to the ship in a partially intoxicated state. Sharp smiled, too, as he saw the ludicrous situation in which his allusion to his temperance principles had placed him.

"I shall hold Sharp responsible for Bently's absence, sir," said the captain to his executive. "You may place him under the sentry's charge;" and Sharp found himself in the most unenviable position he had ever before occupied on board ship.

"I thought ye wouldn't be long out o' yer cage," said Corporal Shay as Sharp was handed over to him. "Sich animils as you be shouldn't be allowed to be loose long at a time."

It being early in the evening the master-at-arms was landed to see if he could learn anything of Joe. After having visited many places which Sharp was known to frequent, at ten o'clock he was obliged to return to the ship having discovered but one trace of Joe. He had met an acquaintance of Sharp's who had seen him with a boy answering Joe's description passing down the lower part of Hanover street. No other clue could he gain, though he

visited more than a dozen places in that part of the city. Upon his return it was decided that a detective must be put upon Joe's track, and the affair was to be placed in the hands of the Chief of Police early next morning. It was agreed on all sides that some ill-fortune had happened Joe, and the greatest promptness would be necessary in unravelling the mystery.

We left Joe in a heavy sleep, under the influence of the opiate, in Aunt Peters's rocking-chair. Before becoming oblivious of things around him he faintly realized the treachery of Sharp. He made a desperate struggle to rise from the chair and get out on to the street, but Peters promptly pushed him back. As Joe sank into sleep he became in the least sense aware that Sharp was divesting him of his knife lanyard, his cap ribbon, and several other articles which would command a ready sale on board ship.

No sooner had Sharp disappeared with his booty than Peters and his wife jerked Joe roughly out of the chair and proceeded to remove his uniform, and even the underclothing which his mother had made for him. His shoes and socks as well became the objects of their avarice. When Joe lay robbed of everything like a poor stripped soldier on the field of battle, a suit of clothes was pulled out from under the bed, ragged and soiled, and much too small. The clothes looked as if they had been last worn by a beggar, as, no doubt, they had been; and these

were made to take the place of Joe's clean, hand some uniform. After these loathsome garments had been pulled on to him, he was dragged to a dark closet opening out of the room and thrown into it so violently that in striking against an old chair he received a deep cut in the back of his head. Then Peters started off after Bill, whoever that worthy might be, who was to assist him in conveying Joe on board the vessel.

About midnight Peters, having found Bill, returned. They shook Joe very roughly, but not succeeding in waking him, they proceeded to kick him into a half-wakeful state. He was first dragged out of the closet and after the shakes and kicks had been administered with an oath, he was jerked to his feet as suddenly as though he had been picked up by a flying sheet in a gale of wind.

The conversation of Peters and Bill should not be repeated as they endeavored in a very cruel manner to arouse Joe's drugged senses sufficiently for him to be able to accompany them to the wharves. In a few minutes, forced to repeated trials, he was able to stand with difficulty. His limbs felt almost paralyzed, and he had the greatest disinclination to exert himself. His head felt so heavy and ached so violently that he could scarcely distinguish any object around him. He barely realized what was going on, and had not yet discovered that he was clothed in rags.

Peters now drew a miserable slouched hat, with

the crown half gone, over Joe's head, and with Bill on one side and himself on the other, the trio set out for the street. The house from which they started stood very near the water, and not far from the wharf where the vessel designed for Joe lay taking in her cargo. It was therefore only a short walk and over ground not frequented by policemen, otherwise Peters would have employed a carriage. When Joe reached the cool night air, in custody of Peters and Bill, he began to revive so far indeed as to realize something of the situation. He saw by the gaslight how he was dressed, and the conversation between Peters and Sharp came slowly back to him. He conjectured rightly that he was now being taken on board some vessel. He had not sufficient command of his limbs to run, even if he could succeed in breaking away. He felt as much as he could feel in a half-stupefied state, that the present was the most critical situation he had ever been in, and he offered a short prayer, as he was accustomed to do, for divine help.

One or two persons passed them, who supposed from Joe's gait that he was intoxicated, and that Bill and Peters were taking him home. They had just turned a corner to pass down by a short way to Commercial street, thence to cross over to the wharf where the vessel lay, when Joe caught sight of two men, which, stupefied as he was, caused his heart to give a great bound. Coming up on the opposite side he discovered Commodore Duff and

Sergeant Gorman, two of his best friends on board ship. The state of Joe's nerves was such that for a moment he feared he could not speak, and he knew they would fail to recognize him in his old clothes. They, too, would think that he was some drunken sailor, whose shipmates were carrying him back to his vessel.

His custodians noticed his excited condition, and looked at each other significantly. Peters put his hand into his pocket and drew out a dirty handkerchief which he attempted to dexterously crowd into Joe's mouth, but he was too late. Discovering his intention, Joe gave a desperate plunge and broke away, shouting as he did so, "Commodore! Sergeant! help, help! I'm Joe Bently."

Peters and Bill sprang for him and jammed the handkerchief into his mouth so that for an instant poor Joe was nearly choked. Commodore Duff and Sergeant Gorman distinguishing their names in his cries, and having heard of his sudden disappearance apprehended the situation instantly, and rushed to Joe's rescue. The master-at-arms had met the commodore ashore, when he came to hunt up Joe, and had told him that foul play was suspected. So he and Sergeant Gorman were prepared for this strange coincidence.

Both Peters and Bill were powerful men and determined to hold on to their prisoner. Gorman was rather slight, while the commodore was corpulent and very clumsy. The sergeant, however, had

the advantage of being a fine boxer. The plan quickly devised by the rascals was for Peters to drag Joe off, while Bill was left to engage the two men whom he thought he could handle with ease. Peters started to drag Joe into a darker street, holding one hand over his mouth so the gag couldn't get out, and Bill dealt the commodore a heavy blow which brought him to the sidewalk. With all the expedition of a practised boxer the sergeant laid Bill insensible on the pavement and started for Peters.

Joe was hanging back with all his might when Sergeant Gorman put a blow behind Peters's ear which sent him staggering. The commodore who had come puffing up gave him another, being bound to get in one stroke for Joe's benefit at least.

Nearly black in the face Joe drew the gag from his mouth and stood ready to assist the sergeant as much as he could in his weak condition, should it become necessary. Peters, however, concluded to rejoin Bill, who by this time had regained his feet. There seemed to be no disposition to renew hostilities, as the men evidently feared that the commodore, who had a tremendous voice as they had already discovered, might raise the police. They therefore started off muttering imprecations on the heads of the whole party.

In a few words Joe told his story.

"Wasn't it lucky I was round?" exclaimed the commodore with pompous egotism. "Them *shanghaiers* would have put you where you'd been glad to

swap with the prodigal son, and throw them clothes into the bargain."

"I didn't believe I should have a chance to save you from that young villain Sharp so soon," kindly interposed Sergeant Gorman. "But you look pale and tired like, and we must send you on board."

Joe was escorted to the nearest boat landing, where the commodore staid with him while Gorman went to arouse the boatman. In a short time Joe was pulled alongside the ship.

"Boat ahoy!" shouted the sentry at the port gangway, in a voice sufficient to wake the whole ship's company.

"Hullo," answered the boatman, the reply when a member of a ship's company not an officer is coming to the vessel.

A lantern was sent to the foot of the gangway in the light of which Joe was barely able to crawl out of the boat and make his way on deck. He was so overcome at getting back that when the officer of the deck asked him to explain his absence and forlorn appearance, he burst into tears, unable for several minutes to say a word. While telling his story in a broken manner he looked so ill that the officer-of-the-deck sent to call the surgeon, and Joe was taken to the sick bay where his clothes were removed, and some others contained in his bag substituted. After taking an antidote to the dose Peters had given him, the effect of which he had described to the surgeon as nearly as he could, he

soon sank into a sound sleep in a cot swinging very near to that of Charlie Smith.

As Sharp lay down upon the deck just outside the cells which properly constitute the ship's brig, where the eye of the sentry could rest upon him, he felt that his complicity with Peters was more than suspected. He knew that every stone would be turned to find out the facts in the case of Bently. "But he's safe on board the *Mohawk* by this time," he said to himself, "and I guess I'm all right."

With this he tried to go to sleep, but found it impossible, as his thoughts were busy, in spite of his efforts to quiet his fears, devising some method of escape. For months he had done quite a thriving business in persuading boys to desert and ship on board merchant vessels, for which he received quite a liberal commission. Only in the case of one other boy whose uniform Joe had seen in Peters's house had he been an accomplice to the extent of employing drugs, and he felt that the experiment was exceedingly dangerous. But he experienced a vicious pleasure in getting boys out of the service, and he had become reckless in the practice of this business, assuring himself all the while that if he were caught he was clever enough to make his escape.

The time had come for him to make an attempt to leave the ship. Upon this he was now fully determined. From his position on the berth deck he heard the boat pull up to the gangway which took

the master-at-arms ashore, and his quick ear caught its distant strokes as it returned. Late in the night he also heard the boat which brought Joe alongside, and he knew from the excited movements on the spar deck that something unusual had taken place. Finally he heard the noise of several people coming down the forward companion ladder, and he was completely dumfounded as he beheld the surgeon helping Joe into the sick bay which opened from the starboard side of the deck where he was a prisoner. He could scarcely believe his senses, but Joe had certainly slipped from Peters's hands, for there he was in one of Aunt Peters's suits, which Sharp instantly recognized, even in the dim light.

Meantime Corporal Shay had been relieved, and a less vigilant sentry took his place. The corporal passed the orders to him, which were to keep a strict watch over Sharp. These orders were rigidly carried out for about an hour, when Sharp noticed that his guard was leaning against a vacant hammock, giving an occasional nod. He waited a few minutes to assure himself that such was the case; then he glided stealthily across the deck, and crept up the forward companion ladder. He slowly raised his head above the hatch-combing to ascertain the position of the sentry of the gun deck, and seeing him far aft with his back turned, he softly sped up the next hatchway and stood on the spar deck. The anchor watch was sitting on the starboard side under cover of the launch, conversing in a low

tone. Aft the officer on duty was quietly pacing the quarter deck.

Sharp was thoroughly familiar with his ground, and the darkness of the night aided him in his movements. Without a sound he climbed to the cathead, and let himself down to the boom along which he crawled, until he reached the Jacob's ladder very near the end. Down this he quickly passed to the dinghy moored below. It was but the work of an instant to unfasten the boat, and to pull her in to the side of the ship, that he might push her around the bows and thus escape detection from the sentries at either gangway. Once before the ship, which pointed seaward, Sharp felt the coast was clear, and he softly adjusted the oars to the rowlocks, and proceeded to pull noiselessly toward the East Boston shore.

Unluckily for him one of his oars slipped in the rowlock, drawing the attention of one of the anchor watch, who immediately reported that there was a small boat off the port bow. Just then the sentry who had been placed in charge of Sharp rushed on deck and reported in great consternation that Sharp had escaped.

"Quartermaster," shouted the officer of the deck, "see if the dinghy is at the boom."

"The dinghy's gone, sir," reported the quartermaster as he took a quick look over the side.

"See if you can pick up that boat on the port bow. Lay aft anchor watch! Lower second whale-

boat ! Quartermaster, turn out the coxswain of the second whaleboat and two more hands ; look alive everybody ! " came from the officer-of-the-deck like shots from a Gatling gun.

It was but a few minutes before the whaleboat was giving chase to Sharp with the odds of five against one. Sharp had heard the commotion on deck, and bent himself to the oars with all his might, making for a fleet of schooners anchored not a great distance away. But the sharp eyes of the coxswain caught sight of the dinghy as she stole in behind the black hull of the one lying farthest out in the stream. In less than twenty minutes from the time Sharp dropped into the dinghy he was a prisoner on deck, and in a few moments more, by order of the captain, to whom everything had been promptly reported, he was lying in double irons, in the gloomiest cell on board ship.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEATH OF CHARLIE SMITH.

THE first thing Joe thought of next morning was his engagement with Mr. Aston. He did not wake till the loud beating of the drum for quarters aroused him, then to his surprise he felt a keen pang of disappointment as he began to realize that it would be impossible for him to go to Portland as agreed. When the surgeon had reported on deck he returned immediately to the sick bay, and finding Joe awake proceeded to feel of his pulse and to make special and kind inquiry touching his feelings. Joe explained his embarrassment in respect to the promised visit to the surgeon, who told him that he would write Mr. Aston, and tell him that his patient was too ill to leave the ship.

“You won’t say anything about the scrape I got into, will you?” anxiously inquired Joe.

The surgeon assured him that he would do nothing but mention his illness and tender his regrets.

Joe’s story had gone around the ship like wild-fire. Sergeant Gorman and Commodore Duff had come off in the early market boat, and the sergeant was telling it modestly and the commodore with

great pomposity to scores of excited boys who besieged them with a heavy musketry of questions.

The commodore made it the occasion for reciting the many gallantries of which he had been the lonely hero, and he concluded with a brilliant peroration to the effect that the United States Navy, in these days, furnished the only outlet to the heroism of human nature, especially his own.

When Joe decided that he would try to get out of his cot he found a neat suit lying upon a stool alongside. Doughty had heard that he was robbed of his uniform, and had gone around the ship to see if he could not raise one among the boys, and received offers of fifty in less than five minutes. He stole in while Bently was asleep and laid out the one selected, so that Joe could find himself once more clothed and in his right mind when he should awake and again don a sailor boy's uniform. Aunt Peters's suit was at that instant two miles down the bay, putting to sea on an ebb tide.

Joe was very dizzy while dressing, and he was obliged to accept the assistance of one of the nurses. After he had moved around a little, he began to feel slightly better, and it was not long before the vertigo that had seized him was nearly all gone. He observed that the sick bay was very quiet. The apothecaries, the nurses, and the surgeons passed around noiselessly, and the boys who were on the binnacle list were permitted to converse only in the lowest tones. All this was done on account of

Charlie Smith. A great change had come over him that morning, and it was whispered about that he could not live but a few hours. His cot had been screened off and the poor little fellow lay in a delirious state occasionally moaning for his mother. By direction of the captain the surgeon had sent her a telegram, urging her if she wished to see her boy alive to start without delay for Boston. All visiting to the sick bay had been strictly forbidden, and all unnecessary noise on board the ship was ordered to be discontinued.

There was intense sympathy among the boys for Charlie. Joe glanced through a small aperture in the door and saw a large number of them waiting outside with very sober faces, anxious to hear any word from the little sufferer. They were also very curious to get a glimpse of Joe, who was now a hero of more than literary or mythical significance.

During the day the captain, who never thought it beneath his dignity to visit a sick sailor boy, came down to see Joe. The captain listened to Joe's account of his misadventure, and congratulated him on his escape. He told him that all sorts of methods were used to get boys on board low merchantmen; that drugging was quite frequent; that he had met with a remarkable deliverance. "Don't have anything more to do with sharpers, my boy," said he. "They know much more of the world than you know, or than an honest, well-bred boy like you ever will know."

Then the captain took a look at Charlie Smith, who partially recognized him and seemed to appreciate, to some extent, his kind look, and his few words of sympathy.

No further change took place in Charlie till about five in the afternoon ; then he began to sink rapidly. Meanwhile his mother had arrived, and sat weeping beside his cot. The chaplain came in and read a short selection of Scriptural passages arranged with reference to Life's last hour. A deep hush fell upon all the ship while the chaplain prayed, for all instinctively knew that the shadows of death were falling. Most loving and tender was the prayer, its burden being, that the poor boy who had been called so young to walk through the dark valley, might as he passed on be met by some shining one who would show him the door of Heaven.

On and on the little fellow travelled in the valley, it being to his struggling imagination no valley at all, but a beach on which his life seemed like a stranded boat. There were bursting hearts around him as he lamented in pathetic tones that the little boat in which he had pulled ashore was left farther and farther up the beach by the ebbing of the tide. "Oh!" he said, "I can't push off the boat alone. What will they say if I'm not back at sundown? They'll call me a deserter, and what will mother think?"

Then he struggled to push off the boat, using what he thought was an oar, tugging all the harder

as he seemed to hear the keel grating on the sand. When the grating ceased, then he moaned and called for help, repeating, "If I'm not back at sundown they'll call me a deserter."

With deep emotion the surgeon, a most kind-hearted man, watched the poor boy's struggles. Suddenly he was seized with a bright thought. Going up to the little fellow's cot, he said in a gentle tone: "Give me the oar, Charlie, and Bently and I will shove off the boat."

He made as though he were taking an oar from the dying boy's hands, and told Bently to push hard at the stern, while he would use the oar. Charlie seemed to again hear the grating of the boat as it sped by means of the surgeon's and Joe's united strength to the water's edge. Then he sank into perfect peace as he felt the little shell bearing him over a smooth surface, each oarstroke seeming to make glad music to his ear.

The boat had indeed reached the current of that stream which glides noiselessly on, bearing such precious freightage upon its bosom to the still port of Death. The sun's last ray shone through the port and fell tenderly upon Charlie's brow as his little boat, in truth, grated upon the golden sands of Heaven.

Had Charlie Smith died far off at sea his hammock would have been his casket, and the ocean his grave. Now military honors were to be accorded him. From admiral to man or boy in the

Navy, of most inferior rating, nothing is wanting in medical skill and attendance in time of sickness, and, in case of death, in respect and honor to the dead. The Government pays a grateful and fitting tribute to its servants from highest officer to humblest sailor lad. It was, therefore, decided that Charlie Smith should have the full benefit of the Government's kindly provision.

Early next morning the boys sent a petition to the executive officer to permit them to contribute toward the purchase of a handsome casket. The request was readily granted, and that evening all that was mortal of Boy Smith, in a bright new uniform, rested in a beautiful casket—the tribute of the boys' affection for their little shipmate. Every boy was in tears as he took a last look at Charlie as he lay in state upon the gun deck, and never did a sadder ship's company go to its hammocks when the drum that night beat tattoo.

The funeral was appointed to take place the next afternoon. The early part of the morning was spent in making out details. Every boy and man who could be spared was to be in attendance. The executive sent down to see if Joe was well enough to act as a pall-bearer, but the surgeon reported him as unable to go on the detail, greatly to Joe's disappointment. All work but necessary ship labor was suspended; the boys moved about with muffled steps, and spoke with hushed voices. Dinner formation came much earlier, and after dinner all boys

were piped up from below. Removing their working suits they put on their best uniforms, completing their dress by attaching a piece of crape to the left sleeve. At one bell the whole ship's company was ready for the solemn service.

Two bells struck and the boatswain's mates blew their whistles, and called solemnly along the decks, "All hands to bury the dead!"

Silently the crew mustered on the starboard side of the gun deck. The chaplain taking his position at the head of the casket, when the order was given to "uncover," proceeded to read a portion of the impressive burial service of the Church of England. Not a sound could be heard but a distant oar-dip in the harbor as the chaplain's tones, in a touching tremolo, passed through the ship.

The boats had all been lowered, and each one with its crew resting on their oars lay off a little distance from the ship. The bugler sounded the call for each separate boat, and one by one they pulled up to the gangway to receive the detachments of men and boys. The colors of each boat were half-masted, in imitation of the ship's flag which flew midway between taffrail and peak. As a mark of respect, the colors of surrounding merchantmen were half-masted. The first boat received the music and the firing party, and pulled off to head the procession; the chaplain, all by himself, took position directly after; next came the steam cutter with the casket, followed by the boat containing the pall-bearers. Other boats fell into line accord-

ing to the rank of the officers in charge. The procession of boats fully formed stretched a long distance across the harbor. It was a sad but impressive sight as, at the order of the executive officer who commanded the escort, the long line of boats slowly started for the shore.

Many people on board schooners, yachts and steamers came out on deck to view the procession. Hundreds gathered on the wharves attracted by the unusual sight. With muffled strokes the boats, each in its order, pulled up to the landing, and discharged all their hands with the exception of boat-keeper. A few evolutions took place upon the wharf, and then the procession formed. The band and firing party led off; the chaplain followed carrying in his hand the Ritual; next came the hearse with six pall-bearers as near to Charlie's age and size as could be selected; after these came men and boys in squads, each squad commanded by an officer. The colors were draped and the drums were muffled.

"Forward! march!" rang along the line. The band struck up a funeral march, and the *cortege* moved slowly on. The arrangement had been so perfect that the several hundred boys gave the appearance of a large regiment. As they marched along Commercial street and up into State street, the way was respectfully and kindly opened for them. Thousands paused amid the hurry and press of business to give the little fellow borne on before them a reverent, sympathetic thought. The eyes of richly dressed ladies filled with tears as they

stopped on Washington street to view the procession. Each passer-by along the whole route to Chelsea, where Charlie was to be laid in the Naval Cemetery, seemed to feel by intuition that some tragedy was connected with the boy lying in the handsome casket. One lady, overcome by grief probably from tender memories of some boy she had lost, sent her driver with a beautiful bouquet which he laid upon the casket.

At the cemetery the military formation was broken, and the boys without order were permitted to gather around the grave. The chaplain committed the body to the dust, and read the beautiful prayers of the Church service. Ladies brought flowers from the hospital and strewed them upon the casket. The marines fired three volleys over the open grave, and all that was mortal of Charlie Smith was laid to rest, to await the sounding of that trumpet which, louder than earth's cannonading and all the blasts of war, shall "pierce the dull cold ear of death."

The gloom was only broken by lively strains of the band as the boys marched back to the boats; the military method of passing from Death's shadow into the sunny places of our ordinary life.

CHAPTER XV.

LAUNCH OF THE KATIE ASTON.

JOE was not to be cheated out of his visit to Portland, after all. Katie Aston obtained her mother's permission to invite him to the launch of a new vessel from her father's yard, bearing her own name. This vessel was to be a gift to Katie from her father, and none but Mrs. Aston had been taken into the secret. The launch was to be a grand affair, and as it has a vital connection with this story, though very indirectly, and only as the sequel will show, its incidents must be recorded.

Three weeks succeeding the events of the last few chapters, Joe took the three P. M. train one day, and early in the evening alighted in a very confused state of mind and awkward state of body, in the Eastern Depot at that attractive city. It is not to be wondered at that his uneasiness along the way resolved itself into absolute dread as the train neared its destination. Moral and physical courage are forms of that quality, of which we have found as yet no lack in Joe's character. But what we may term social courage is so entirely different that it seems to derive no strength or growth whatever

from the other forms. Joe had plenty of the former kind of courage, but scarcely any of the latter.

As he stepped from the train, could he have had his preference, it is a matter of uncertainty whether he would have met the Astons or been shot for desertion. What was mounting to the main truck, or encountering the ship's bully, to this? He would rather risk his life in a burning car a dozen times so he thought now, when no burning car was near, than meet Katie Aston at her own home. He could not reconcile his feelings, now that he was here, in any possible way with his desire to come.

All, however, to no purpose. No sooner had his foot touched the platform than his hand was warmly grasped by Mr. Aston. His face was scarlet when Katie, who had accompanied her father to the depot, stepped forward, and, in a very pretty manner, gave him a cordial welcome. As they walked out to the carriage Joe felt as tall as the Chinese giant, and his hands felt as if they were weighted down with dumb-bells. The dim light of the depot, however, helped him to recover a little of his self-possession.

He did not appear half so awkward as he felt. Katie's quick eye instantly noted his external improvements. His pretty uniform did certainly enhance his attractiveness in her artistic judgment. Unconsciously he had been picking up sailor airs and manners. Before leaving the car he had given the smallest perceptible tip to his cap, and the faintest elongation to his tie. These small offices, to-

gether with the slight roll in his gait, which he had partly inherited, were not lost on Katie, who, in common with nearly all very young ladies, was easily brought under the spell of the sea.

On the way to the house, in spite of all his efforts to do otherwise, Joe could not converse with any freedom. His tongue felt thick and clumsy, and he was heartily ashamed of the feeble little monosyllables he was all the time getting off.

He attempted something off-hand and sailor-like, but it was a miserable failure.

Mr. Aston saw his embarrassment and told one of his most amusing stories, at which Joe laughed heartily. A good laugh steadies a diffident boy or girl as a mainsail does a rolling ship in a gale of wind, and by the time the carriage rounded up to Mr. Aston's door, Joe was rather surprised at his composure.

Mr. Aston's house was one of the finest, though by no means the most ostentatious, in the city. It stood by itself, having — what is quite unusual in large cities — several acres of ground around it. This small estate was laid out after the most approved methods of landscape gardening. Oak and maple trees abounded, which were now aflame with the richest autumnal colors. Leading from the house was a large conservatory, and far in the rear, at the end of a pretty carriage way, was a brick stable whose front wall was literally covered with vines. Enclosing all was a high stone wall,

the top bristling with pieces of old junk bottles to keep poachers away from the very choice fruit within. Perched high up at each corner of the gateway was a bronze owl, whose eyes, by means of internal gas fixtures, burned like coals.

The interior of the house was even more splendid than the one in which Joe had spent his first night in Boston. A servant answered the ring, and they entered the hall, from which they passed into a sumptuous drawing-room where Mrs. Aston was waiting to receive them. She greeted Joe very pleasantly, and, turning, introduced him to a very pretty, roguish-looking Miss, who was on a visit to Katie from Boston. Her name was Maud Edgerton. She was about Katie's age, had dancing hazel eyes and a very jolly face, whose mischievous look shot terror into Joe's soul at the outset.

Very red in the face he extended his big brown hand (how very tarry it looked to him now), which he thought the polite thing to do, and Maud took it with a comical expression, which made Joe think he had done something extremely awkward. But Miss Maud could not help being pleased with Joe. He was very manly-looking, in spite of his diffidence. She was very fond of the Navy, being acquainted with several midshipmen, though Joe was the first apprentice boy she had ever met. Her father owned a yacht, and her brother was a member of the Harvard Boat Club, and as she ran her eye over Joe, she thought what a jolly yachtsman

he would make, and what an oar he must pull.

Dinner was waiting, and Mrs. Aston said they would go down without further delay. In the most matter-of-fact way she laid hold of Joe's arm, leaving the young ladies to Mr. Aston. Escorting a lady to dinner, and such a fine lady as Mrs. Aston, too, made Joe's knees almost knock together. He felt as unsteady as he would have been with a hundred pound weight upon his shoulder. But he got to the dining-hall with no more serious experience than a little pitching and rolling.

He was given a seat at the extreme end of the table, which left a very narrow space intervening between him and the wall. He was glad of this, for it removed him some distance from Miss Maud, whose love of fun, he intuitively felt, would find some means of gratifying itself at his expense.

He got through the early part of the dinner very well, and was beginning to get over his shyness, when he observed Miss Maud eying him rather comically. Eating as a fine art, we know, would not be likely to be much cultivated in the Aroostook, where the farmers work from daylight till dark, and a mess of sailor boys would be the last ones in the world, except the Esquimaux, to learn table manners from. Is it any wonder then that Joe was "shoveling" his dinner in the good old-fashioned way when he caught Miss Maud's amused look?

It so disconcerted him that, in the nervous agitation which followed, some mashed potato, which

he was in the act of raising to his mouth, fell from the end of his knife. This was succeeded by the loss of the knife itself. Worse still, in his attempt to recover the knife, he upset his glass of water, flooding his plate and soaking both himself and the tablecloth. Maud and Katie had all they could do to keep straight faces, while poor Joe's face was as red as a powder flag.

But this was nothing compared with the final catastrophe. The servant, a very green Irish girl, came in, mopped up the water, spread a fresh napkin over the damp place, and started to return to the sideboard after a clean plate. She thought she could economize time and labor by passing behind Joe's chair. It would have been impossible for a much smaller person to crowd through, but she made the attempt, and got caught like a salmon in the wickerwork of a fish weir; and there she hung, floundering. Joe was jammed against the table so tightly that he could scarcely breathe. He attempted to rise, and succeeded in barely raising himself from the chair. This was just the thing he ought not to have done, for no sooner was the chair relieved of its weight than, owing to the pressure from behind, it shot from under him. Joe's centre of gravity, from the position he was in, lay about a foot under the table, and, being unable to recover it, he sat down heavily upon the floor.

If the house that instant had been shaking to pieces from an earthquake or a tornado, with poor

Joe in such an attitude, they would have been unable to help themselves from laughter.

"Steady there," cried Mr. Aston. "You can't expect an old salt like Bently to keep on his sea legs in a dead calm."

"O papa!" piped up Katie between the intervals of stuffing her napkin into her mouth, "do you remember that time the yacht gave such a dreadful lurch in Frenchman's Bay, and we were all thrown in a heap against the wall" —

"Bulkhead," interrupted her father.

"Yes, bulkhead, and two plates of soup went all over me and spoilt my new yachting suit. The dishes were all broken, and the steward had to come in with a swab and mop up the soup."

Joe wished that a swab might be run over him, and lamented that he had ever been so silly as to come on this visit. But the most contagious thing in this world is good humor, and after Joe got seated again, he had to join in with the rest. In a few moments he was laughing so heartily that the tears streamed down his face.

When they returned to the drawing-room, Joe was in a much more cheerful mood. The ice had been so thoroughly broken that, notwithstanding the occasional sense of mortification he experienced, when he would upbraid himself for his awkwardness and stupidity, he felt that the catastrophe at the table had established more sympathetic relations between him and his friends. And he found that he

could laugh and converse much more easily than before.

He played authors with Maud and Katie, and told them of many of his experiences on the training ship, even going so far, which he afterwards greatly regretted, as to tell them of his betrayal into Uncle Peters's hands, and of his singular escape. Very quickly and pleasantly the evening passed away, and when the clock struck ten he was surprised to have bedtime come so soon.

At breakfast, next morning, he began a sly apprenticeship to the use of the fork. Miss Maud detected it, and gave him a comical look, which brought back some of his old confusion, but not enough to cause any more accidents. At ten the carriage arrived to take them to the shipyard where the *Katie Aston* was to be launched.

A crowd of men and boys had assembled in the yard, and as the carriage drove in, it was preceded and followed by a large number of carriages containing invited guests. Quite a number of vessels were on the stocks, some of them nearly finished. The *Katie Aston* occupied the most conspicuous position of all, as she ought to do, being queen of the yard. The young ladies jumped from the carriage, and telling Joe to follow, started to take a look at this beautiful craft before going on board.

The new vessel was a five-hundred-ton brig, and looked very proud as she hung poised like an immense diver ready for her first plunge into the sea.

She was certainly one of the handsomest models that could be found. Her cutwater curved gracefully, her bows were clean and sharp, and there was just swell enough of the sides to give her, as the young ladies exclaimed, "lovely lines!" There was some beautiful gilt tracing around the name on the stern which was put on in heavy gilt letters artistically carved. The figurehead was exceedingly pretty. It was the form of a maiden, who stood as on some high, jutting point, hat in hand, the light breeze playing with her golden hair, while she looked with longing eyes far off to sea. An artist had been employed to design this figure. It was so natural, and in possession of so much grace, that it was very much admired by all beholders. The brig was painted black, with a white streak running all around, and looked, in her bran-new dress as if she had been carved out of ebony.

Only privileged ones were allowed to go on board. There were a great number of these, for Mr. Aston had sent out several hundred invitations. Many of Katie's schoolmates were present with their parents and friends. Joe helped Maud and Katie up the step-ladder over the side, and a swarm of misses gathered about them. There were many curious glances at Joe, everybody wondering who the young blue jacket could be. Katie gave him an introduction all around as her friend Joe Bently, an apprentice boy in the United States Navy. Joe's eyes blinked a good deal, and his face was very red at

having to meet so many people, but he got on very well.

There was one lady present who had a son that had just entered the Naval Academy as a midshipman ; and she was very anxious to learn something about life on board ship. She plied Joe with questions which he answered to the best of his ability, and then she asked him what he hoped to become. " You surely don't expect to be a common sailor ? " she concluded.

Joe told her that he could not be an officer, if he wanted to be ever so much. His plan was to make himself as thorough a seaman as possible, and let the future take care of itself. " I'd like to be an officer very much, and if ever the country gets into a war, perhaps I may work myself up to such a position," he observed, just as he had to go through with several more introductions.

Mr. Aston had overheard the latter part of this conversation. He seemed particularly interested in that portion which related to the impracticability of an apprentice boy ever becoming an officer ; and had anybody been sharp enough to observe it, it would have been discovered, that at that particular point he became possessed of a new idea in reference to Master Joe. Whatever it was, however, he kept it to himself.

At precisely half-past eleven there was the profoundest silence among the spectators as the shipwrights relieved the brig of her fastenings, and she

shot into the stream as gracefully as a seabird down the side of a mountain billow. A loud shout rent the air as she touched the water, and the band stationed in the forecastle struck up a very lively air. For a few minutes it was uncertain which would get the better, the music or the cheering.

No sooner had the brig's way been checked by letting go an anchor, than a steam tug hauled alongside, and a caterer in white gloves and swallow-tail bustled around superintending the getting of a grand lunch on board. He ordered about his half-dozen colored waiters as though he were taking in sail in a squall.

The cabin, though not quite completed, was made very attractive by an artistic display of all the brig's bunting which was finished and of course brand-new. Temporary seats and tables had been erected, huge quantities of flowers had been sent on board, and Joe was surprised at the beautiful effect of everything when the caterer with his squad had arranged the tables. The lunch was a superb affair. Course after course came on in a profusion that Joe had never seen imitated, and the caterer looked as if he would be thrown into a fit of sickness should anything be a failure. One or two table articles created a good deal of fun. For example, instead of the cruets full of black and white pepper usually passed around, there was a tiny silver mill containing pepper corns. Two or three turns of a small crank threw out a cloud of pepper. The most amusing

was a small silver Indian boy holding a bow and arrow, who, by pressing a spring in his back, threw out sprays of salt from the point of his cunning arrow.

After the lunch had been disposed of Mr. Aston observed that a little ceremony was due the occasion. "I therefore," he said, rising to his feet, "present this brig to my daughter Katie. It is a birthday gift, and is also to commemorate the saving of her life in the recent disaster, about which you have all heard. It also gives me great pleasure to have present to-day the lad who was instrumental in saving her life."

Katie could hardly believe her senses when her father announced that the *Katie Aston* was an actual gift to her. She had learned to love every timber in the beautiful vessel, and received the congratulations of her friends with much joyous effusion. Poor Joe was confounded by Mr. Aston's allusion to himself and wished he were a thousand miles away.

That afternoon, being summoned by telegram to appear as a witness in a court martial, he bade a hearty good-by to his young friends, and went out from the home, but not from the memory of the Astons.

CHAPTER XVI.

COURT MARTIAL.

FOR weeks Sharp and Herdicks had been brooding over their crimes in solitary confinement. In view of the developments in each case their meditations were not of a nature to relieve the irksomeness of their detention in the brig. The only thing which in the least brightened their prospects was the determination of each one to stoutly maintain his innocence ; or, if that failed, to plead youthfulness in extenuation of the several crimes for which they were now sure they would be indicted.

Meanwhile they were well cared for. The surgeon inspected them daily ; and three times a day Commodore Duff served out to them a full ration, though he did so untlér compulsion. Every night a mattress was placed in each cell with plenty of blankets, and, barring the deprivation of liberty, they fared even better than they would have done performing the ordinary tasks of blacklisters about the decks. After a long time the necessary instructions and papers arrived from Washington, ordering a General Court Martial, the highest tribunal in Army or Navy.

Both cases had been carefully worked up by the captain, and reported to the Secretary of the Navy. The information had been minute and specific, and created a good deal of interest at the Navy Department. The Secretary of the Navy, whose duty it is next to the President, to order all General Court's Martial, made a careful detail of the officers who were to serve. A commander from the Brooklyn Navy Yard was to be presiding officer ; the judge advocate was a marine officer of distinction in military trials ; a very bright ensign, with much talent for journalism, and very quick in taking down proceedings assisted the judge advocate ; the other members, a lieutenant commander, several lieutenants, a paymaster and a surgeon, were each thoroughly familiar with court martial duties. It was generally agreed that no better detail could have been made.

The chief witnesses, upon whose testimony the captain had arranged the charges and specifications, were the surgeon, Sergeant Gorman, Commodore Duff, Doughty and Joe ; Joe's testimony, of course, being the most important of all. It got round the ship that there was other evidence, especially in the case of Sharp, which would be more damaging, if possible, to him than that of Bently. The captain was determined to have examples made of these unusual cases, which should protect the apprentices from any further exposure to the designs of bad characters who, by perjury had worked or should thereafter work, their way into the Navy.

None of the boys knew the time for the convening of the court martial, till one day, the next after Joe's return from Portland, a number of officers came on board ship in frock coats and epaulettes, with swords, and an order was immediately given to prepare the starboard steerage as a sitting place for the court. The captain of the afterguard raised a crew of boys with Joe as one of the number, and under direction from an officer, the court room was speedily "rigged." The arrangement for such an august body Joe thought marvelously simple. A large extension table was drawn out, a small table with eleven chairs brought in from the wardroom, a Bible procured, and the place stood ready for the trials.

Joe and Doughty thought they would stay in the court room until they were ordered out, to see how things went on. The court martial excited the intensest interest among the boys, and they stood in all the open spaces about the steerage, watching proceedings with eyes wide open, and whispering their various comments. A marine had been stationed at the door, and another had been detailed as messenger of the court.

Presently ten officers filed in. They conversed a moment concerning the arrangements, noticed the omission of stationery from the table, and when a quantity had been brought in and distributed, without further delay, the court was declared open by the judge advocate, who, at the same time, or-

dered the first prisoner to be tried to be introduced.

A corporal came in with Herdicks in custody, free from all bonds. The captain had deemed it necessary to keep him in single irons a part of the time, but, here as in a civil court, no fetters were allowed.

The prisoner was permitted to seat himself in the chair standing alongside the small table. The judge advocate then in a clear voice proceeded to read the names of the members of the court according to seniority, and each member took his place at the table. The president of the court seated himself at the centre, the lieutenant commander took the first seat on his right, the paymaster, the next in rank, the first seat on his left; and in this manner, from right to left, according to the respective rank of the officers, the seating went on till the last member was in his place. The judge advocate sat at the centre of the table, opposite the president.

It is not necessary to give the words of the precept for convening the court, or his warrant for officiating, which the judge advocate now read. This done, he ordered the prisoner to stand, and said, "Tippington Herdicks, third class boy, United States Navy, have you any objection to any officer sitting on this court?"

Tip made no objection, and the court proceeded. The president of the court, whose place it is simply to preside and preserve order, having nothing whatever to do with the prosecution, or the conduct of

the trial, now swore the judge advocate. The judge advocate thereupon read the oath slowly and audibly, and the members placed their right hands upon the Bible which he presented ; after which, beginning with the president, they successively kissed the book in token of assent, as they did so passing it from one to the other in order of rank.

Everything was now ready for the trial. A copy of the charge had been previously given to Herdicks, and he was not in ignorance of the grave nature of the accusation. The charge read before the court by the judge advocate was, "Manslaughter." The specification ran :

"That on, or about, September —, 18—, while the United States Steamship — lay at anchor in Boston harbor, after tattoo, when all hands had turned in for the night, among them being Tippington Herdicks, third class apprentice boy, United States Navy, and Charles A. Smith, late third class boy, United States Navy, the said Tippington Herdicks did willfully and unlawfully cut, and cause to sever, the clews of Charles A. Smith's hammock, thereby causing the said Charles A. Smith to fall to the deck in such manner as to fatally injure the said Smith, by reason whereof he died on the — day of September, 18—."

To the specification and the charge Herdicks pleaded "Not guilty," and asked that he be allowed counsel. This request being granted, he selected Lieutenant —, who, in view of the fact that Her-

dicks was a member of his division, consented to serve. Giving notice to all persons present, who had been summoned as witnesses, that they must retire and not appear in court again until called for, the judge advocate proceeded, on behalf of the Government, to produce witnesses to establish the charge.

The master-at-arms was first brought in and sworn.

"Were you on duty the night of the —— day of September?" asked the judge advocate.

"I was."

"Was there any disturbance on the berth deck that night?"

"There was."

"State what occurred as nearly as you can recall it."

"I had just turned in, but was not asleep, when I heard a noise like some one falling from a hammock. Immediately after, some distance forward of the place from which the first sound proceeded, I heard a scuffle. I jumped out of my hammock and ran forward, where I found Bently with Herdicks under him, pounding him, and singing out something about spilling a little boy, and calling Herdicks a coward and a sneak, as near as I can recollect. I separated them, just as the officer of the deck ran forward and wanted to know what it was all about. When Bently got his breath, he said that he had seen Herdicks spill a little boy named Smith, and that was why he had tackled Herdicks. The

officer of the deck then called Smith, and as he didn't come, he sent me to hunt him up. It was then I found him unconscious on the deck."

"How did you know that the hammock was cut down?"

"I examined the clews after Smith was taken away and found they had been cut with a sharp knife, and all severed but one strand. It was the breaking of that that let Smith down."

"Do you recognize the accused as the boy with whom Bently had the altercation?"

"I do."

The next witness of any importance was a lad named Hiram Waters. He was sworn, and preliminary questions were put to him, the same in purport as those addressed to the master-at-arms. He was then asked: "Have you ever noticed any hazing of recruits on board this ship?"

"I have."

"Have you ever known Tippington Herdicks to be engaged in that practice?"

"Yes, sir; he seemed to be the leader of what hazing there was."

"State all you know about his connection with hazing."

"The last three months he seemed to take it into his head to haze all the little fellows; and when Smith came on board, he pitched upon him at once; I don't know for what reason, unless it was because he was so little. The first thing he did was to fix

his hammock one night so that when Smith jumped into it it would go by the run. I felt kind of bad for Smith, and fixed his hammock all right for him before he turned in and saved him that time. Once he rigged a hook at the end of a long line and fastened it to Smith's blanket. When Smith tried to pull it—the blanket—over him, Herdicks gave it a jerk, and obliged Smith to run after it all around the deck, making the boys all laugh at him. The night he spilled Smith, he told me while a lot of us were skylarking in the forecastle, that he was going 'to spill Bently that night.' I told him that he didn't dare to, because Bently looked as if he could lick any boy on board ship. He said he'd had trouble with Bently, and he was going to take it out of him, and that he'd hated him from the first time he'd laid his eyes on him. I suppose he meant to cut down Bently, and got the wrong hammock. That's all I know."

Joe, the next witness, told a straightforward story, giving the particulars minutely, as already related. His testimony was the most damaging, as he was the only witness who had seen the actual cutting down of the hammock. The court spent a long time examining him, and the prisoner was given opportunity to cross-question, but by the advice of his counsel he declined. From Waters' and Joe's testimony, it came out that hazing had nothing to do with the affair, and Herdicks' conduct seemed altogether inexplicable from the very slight provo-

cation he had received in being merely knocked out of the ranks, and that by accident. It was evidently one of those mysterious and stony cases of depravity which are occasionally met with in all departments of life.

The surgeon's testimony was to the effect that Smith came to his death by falling from his hammock. A post-mortem examination had shown that there was concussion of the brain, and a severe injury to the spine, from which causes the poor boy had died.

Here the counsel for the accused asked leave to withdraw the plea "Not guilty," and enter the plea "Guilty," asking the court's clemency for the prisoner on the ground that he had no intention of doing any more than had been done in a hundred other cases on board ships to which he himself had been attached, and from which no bad consequences came, and that he had no malice whatever toward Smith.

The proceedings then closed, and the room was cleared for deliberation. The court found the accused, of the charge, "Guilty;" and they therefore sentenced the said Tippington Herdicks, to be confined, at hard labor, in such place as the Honorable Secretary of the Navy should designate, for a period of ten years; to lose all pay and allowances that should become due him during the term of his imprisonment, amounting in all to one thousand and eighty dollars, excepting two dollars per month

for necessary prison expenses, and a further sum of twenty-five dollars to be paid him at the expiration of his sentence ; and then to be dishonorably discharged from the United States Navy. That he cut down the wrong boy was no mitigation whatever of the offence.

While this sentence waited the approval of the captain of the ship, and the Secretary of the Navy, the trial of Sharp took place before the same court.

The charges and specifications against Sharp were framed with the greatest care. The total lack of principle which he exhibited, together with his very grave and numerous offences, and, farther, the opportunities he had had to change his life, had he been prompted by a single true motive, called for severe punishment. Even a greater interest was felt in this trial than in that of Herdicks.

There were three charges against Sharp. The first one, which the judge advocate read, when the prisoner was brought into court, was, " Conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline in the Navy." The specification stated minutely all the circumstances of the visit ashore, beginning with Sharp's proposition on the Common to Joe, to ship on board the vessel bound to Barcelona, and concluding with the incidents at Uncle Peters's house.

Charge second read : " Enticing others to desert."

It was specified that Sharp had enticed and assisted a third class boy named Seward to desert, by

holding out to him assurances of better employment. That he had, further, hired a boat to come alongside in the night, and helped Seward to steal away from the ship by first letting him over the bows by a line into the boat, and, secondly, lowering his clothes after him.

The third charge was "Conspiracy."

The specification ran that the said Sharp was in complicity with parties on shore to get naval apprentices into merchant vessels whether by fair or by foul means, and that the said Sharp received fees for the same.

To these specifications and charges Sharp pleaded, "Not guilty," and chose the head schoolmaster for counsel.

The witnesses were legion. As one after another they were called in, Sharp looked bewildered. Commodore Duff was in his element. His account of the attack upon Uncle Peters and Bill was quite a marvel of pompous word painting. Joe while giving his testimony could see by the looks of the officers that the treatment he received at Peters' house raised a good deal of indignation against Sharp. The surgeon testified to the nature of the drugging; and much circumstantial evidence was given, confirming Joe's story in many particulars. Then the testimony seemed to be all in.

But no; the Government was not yet satisfied. The father of Boy Seward who, it has been seen, was one of Sharp's victims, now presented a letter

to the court, just received from his son in Havana. It explained how Sharp had enticed him to desert, and how he had taken care to secure the advance money. The boatman, already referred to, was also brought in, and sworn. It was only after he was assured by the court that no harm would come to him for giving the facts, that he told how the affair of getting the boy off in the night had been managed.

The last witness called was a stranger who had come on board in the morning and had apparently been wandering aimlessly around the ship. After giving his name, he stated that his occupation was that of superintending the State Reform School of Connecticut. When he appeared, Sharp's head went down. He first stated that Sharp's name was an *alias*; that his true name was Clarence Barton. He had run away from the Reform School two years before, of which he was then a member on account of a strange propensity for swindling, which began to develop in him when he was quite a small boy. Many incidents came out in the questioning not at all complimentary to Sharp, and the testimony for the prosecution closed.

The usual privileges were offered Sharp, but he considered his case hopeless. The room was then cleared. After deliberation the court found the said Clarence Barton, *alias* Israel Sharp, of all the charges, "guilty." They thereupon sentenced him to be confined in such place as the Honorable Secretary of the Navy should designate for a period of

five years ; to lose all pay and allowances that should become due him during that period, amounting to five hundred and forty dollars, excepting two dollars per month for necessary prison expenses, and twenty-five dollars, to be paid him at the expiration of his term of confinement, and then to be dishonorably discharged from the service of the United States.

Two weeks after, the papers of the court returned to the ship, signed and approved by the Secretary of the Navy. The next morning, at ten o'clock, all hands were called to muster ; and, the prisoners being brought to the mast, amid a stillness which could be almost heard, the executive officer read the sentences of the court with the approval of the Honorable Secretary and the Commanding Officer of the Ship. Herdicks burst into tears, but Sharp looked but little disturbed. That afternoon the boys were sent to Wethersfield, Ct., and the next morning appeared in uniforms of which they were not so proud as they had been of the blue jackets they had forever lost.

CHAPTER XVII.

JOE IS SENT TO A CRUISER.

LAY aft here, Bently," sung out Commodore Duff to Joe, shortly after breakfast one morning, "I've got a galley yarn for you."

"What is it?" inquired Joe, all interest. Like all sailors, he was beginning to attach vast importance to the fiction, for the most part, manufactured in that loquacious part of a ship termed the "galley."

"Fifty of the best boys are going on a draft, and they say you and Doughty are down."

"Where we going?" pursued Joe.

"To a new ship, of course—a regular cruiser. You've been boobies long enough, and they're going to make men of you. Call this sailorizing?" continued the commodore, looking around him with contempt. "You might as well ship on a canal boat, or that dredging machine," pointing to the last-named piece of flotilla just beginning its day's work on a shallow place in the harbor.

This news was hailed with delight, though the untrustworthiness of its source created a strong doubt in our hero's mind of its veracity. He was not tired of the schoolship; he only wished to make

a practical use of the knowledge he had been acquiring, and see something of the world. He wanted to reef and furl sail in an actual gale of wind. Instead of telling a board of officers on an examination how he would put the wheel should a green light suddenly heave in view on the starboard bow, he desired to grasp an actual wheel, and to see an actual green light bearing down upon him. In gunnery he wished to sight a real target, and send a real shell through it over a thousand yards of water. His temperament was of that active, ardent nature which made him intensely practical in all he did.

Joe made but slight parley with the commodore. With two jumps he landed in the forecabin to find Doughty. Learning that he was doing some work in the maintop, he rushed up the rigging and tumbled in almost on top of Doughty, and nearly returned to the deck by pitching through the lubber hole.

"What in the world's the matter!" exclaimed Doughty as he grabbed Joe and helped him to regain his feet.

"The commodore says you and I are drafted to go in a cruiser; I hope it is so, don't you?" gasped Joe all out of breath.

"I don't know but I do," thoughtfully replied Doughty. "I haven't been expecting anything of the kind. The captain said the other day that they weren't going to touch the boys on the schoolships

for a year ; but we'll find out ;" and they started pell-mell for the deck.

Dropping from the rigging, they hastened to the ship's writer's office, and Doughty, generally spokesman, asked the ship's writer if it was true that a draft had been ordered.

"Sorry to say there has been," replied the ship's writer. "There's the list just completed. Your name and Bently's are the last down. The executive officer hesitated to put you two in the detail, but he said he could not get round the Department's order, and you had to go down. You'd better be off looking after your traps. You've got to leave by the Fall River Line for New York to-night."

Just then, unexpectedly, came a call for all the boys to muster on the starboard side of the gun-deck. By this time the news had gone all through the ship. The superior alertness of a galley yarn would mortify the telegraph, to say nothing of the burning chagrin it would bring to the telephone, and when, as in this instance, the truth gives it wings, its speed is beyond all computation.

As the boys came pouring aft there were many anxious as well as pleased looking faces among them. A few seemed in mortal dread lest their names should be called out. There are always some who have a horror of the sea, and the surprise is that they should ever trust their feet upon a treacherous deck, even in harbor. But by far the

greater number appeared delighted at the prospect of having their names on the list.

All gathered, the captain made a little speech, in which he expressed his regret that the needs of the service required such frequent drafts of apprentices, and of the very best boys. He told them that the best boys had been called for in this draft, as the ship to which they were detailed was to join the Mediterranean squadron. "Those of you who are to go, my lads," he said, personally addressing the detachment, "must remember the high ideal and the advanced knowledge of the service you have entered which it has been our constant aim to inculcate. The best wishes of your commanding officer will go with you."

Joe and Doughty were much pleased to hear the names of their best friends among the boys then read off. Little Sol, Hanson, Walker, Joe's most intimate friend next to Doughty, and many others with whom he had been much thrown since the court martial. Joe had exercised great caution in the choice of associates since his betrayal by Sharp. But he was in truth in no farther danger, as with the departure of Herdicks and Sharp the rogues were weeded out. The most disappointed boy at being left behind was Gabriel Butts. He went around the ship with a most lugubrious countenance, and at last bolted in front of Joe who was neatly stowing his clothing in his bag, waiting the inspection of the lieutenant of his division.

"I s'pose they wouldn't have me," Butts began, "because they're afear'd o' me. I 'low they think I'd bust a gun, or fire off rockets, or sarse the officers. But I wouldn't do nothin' of the kind."

Recently Butts had hung around Joe a good deal, and Joe had befriended him among the boys. In fact, Butts had become quite a favorite on account of the absurd things his insatiable curiosity and not very discerning intellect led him to do. Many a laugh was there at his expense from cabin to forecastle, and as he seemed incurable, the ordinary means of discipline, in his case, had measurably abated. When he therefore appeared to Joe with such a woe-begone face, Joe thought that he would be actually glad to have Butts continued as a ship-mate. A few moments before he had heard a boy named Huxy, bemoaning his luck in being put in the draft.

"There's Huxy," he said, seized with a bright idea, "who doesn't want to go. See if you can't get on in his place."

"S'pose I could?" eagerly returned Butts, brightening up very much.

"You can bear a hand and try," answered Joe.

Butts hastened to Huxy, and was overjoyed to find that brave young seaman in tears, talking to some boys standing by in a most melancholy strain. He evidently had no relish for salt water, though he had been a most gallant young tar ashore. When Butts blundered out his proposition, Huxy's

look was like the sun breaking through the middle of a black cloud.

"If we only could swap!" Huxy exclaimed, perfectly willing to sacrifice Butts to old Neptune, who filled his heroic soul with such dread.

After canvassing the matter they instinctively fixed upon Schoolmaster Bell as their intermediary. Huxy had been a kind of assistant to Bell, getting up his blackboards, and taking down seats for his classes in navigation; and it so happened that this office would fall to Gabriel after Huxy's departure. Bell was well aware that Butts would not do the work, and he was turning the matter over in his mind at that very time greatly to the disparagement of Butts. When, therefore, the boys laid their plan before him, he quickly assented, and urged his need of Huxy so strongly that the executive officer to whom he appealed made the change at once. When Butts was made acquainted with the result he ran forward in great elation, singing out as he ducked below after the boy, "I'm goin', I'm goin'!"

When the tug shoved off that afternoon which was to take the boys to the nearest point to the depot, the cheering was tremendous. Their old shipmates from the hammock nettings and the rigging cheered the boys lustily, which they returned with compound interest. The ship, the captain, the officers, the crew, and last of all Commodore Duff and Sergeant Gorman who stood upon the

top-gallant forecastle, were cheered vociferously. The commodore at this distinction gained several inches in height. "Them young land-lubbers," he observed, "won't be so lively when they git green water under 'em. They'll git brine enough crossing the Atlantic this season. They'll wish they was alligators in Florida before they git to Lisbon. I'm sorry to lose that Bently, though. I've had a big interest in him ever since I saved him from them Shanghaiers."

The ship to which the boys were sent was a new vessel just fitted out for sea. She was the finest model as well as the fastest cruiser in the Navy. She had every improvement in the way of rifled guns mounted on carriages worked by cranks instead of ropes and the old-fashioned hand-spikes, electrical apparatus, a steam windlass and steam steering gear, etc., and was the only vessel in the Navy from which much could be expected in case of war. Her officers had all joined her, her crew had been transferred from the different guard ships, and the day the boys reached her she was to be put in commission, and drop down from the Navy Yard to the Battery to take in her powder.

The boys were hustled on board their new ship, the roll was hastily called to see that none were missing, and they had just time to stow their bags and hammocks when all hands were called to muster on the spar deck. Joe and Doughty got a good position just aft of the wardroom skylights where

they could get a good view of all that was to take place.

Their new shipmates stood a solid mass forward as far as the mainmast. While they waited for the ceremony to take place which was to put the ship in commission (for this was the occasion of the general muster) the boys got a good look at the crew, and on the whole were quite well pleased with them.

To a new recruit the crew of a man-of-war has a fascinating interest. They have all the freshness and novelty that would be attached to the inhabitants of a new world, if by some strange chance he should be set down in their midst. A man-of-war is indeed a little world in itself. Lying at anchor, or slipping noiselessly along under the stars, there is a silence and mystery about it that seem to belong to a far-off world.

But how much of real life is hidden within the bulwarks! A few sad histories are there; some records which would not bear the light; a few careers which began in the sunniest places of this life are ending here in shadows impenetrable. Various are the motives which have driven and lured men here — the tyrannies of unhappy homes; the hope of deliverance from the thralldom of bad habits by means of the stern discipline of military laws and rule; the evasion of justice; love of romance and adventure; and occasionally motives of patriotism. But it would be slandering a noble class of

men to say that there is not the same average respectability among them that working men ashore possess. The wonder is that amid peculiar and constant temptations they are so loyal to moral principle and duty.

But we have well-nigh forgotten our story. Joe and Doughty had no more than finished scrutinizing their new shipmates when the captain and his executive appeared on deck. Taking his position just forward of the mizzen mast, the captain proceeded to read, amid the profoundest silence, the order from the Secretary of the Navy assigning him to the command of that ship. The executive then made a sign to the signal quartermaster who broke the stops at the peak which held the ensign, and in an instant it was fluttering over the newly commissioned ship. Joe looked up and saw that the colors were flying union down. He heard the men in back of him break out: "Bad luck, union down!"

"Haul down, and right that flag," came from the executive in a very energetic order.

"That's a very stupid thing," Joe overheard the captain remark, as the colors were hauled from the peak and properly adjusted.

This ceremony over, the captain and executive took the bridge, and all hands were called to get the ship under way. The lines and chains were quickly cast off, and by the aid of a powerful tug, in a short time she was safely anchored off the Battery ready

to take in her supplies of ammunition. For two days a red flag flew at the main, the signal that the ship was receiving her powder. All the boats engaged in the work of transportation carried each a red flag in the bow; no fires were allowed in the galley, and no open lights in any part of the ship, a fact much deprecated at the galley, in the various messes and among the smokers.

Meanwhile those officers not in charge of boats were busy organizing the ship's company. Each boy was severely catechised to see how much seamanship and gunnery he knew. Butts afforded a great deal of amusement by some of his answers. For instance, he knew that the bowsprit was not in the stern of the ship, but he had to have his organs of vision fixed upon it to be able to acquaint others of the fact. He had already distinguished himself somewhat to the disgust and mortification of Joe and Doughty. During the absence of the captain's orderly from the cabin door on a message, Butts had unshipped a fine barometer which hung in front of the cabin, which he held upside down to see if the mercury would move. He never could conceive how atmospheric changes could cause the elevation or depression of such a solid-looking mass. He said "he knew better — they couldn't fool him — the stuff didn't move."

Butts moved toward the forecastle a good deal faster than mercury was ever known to rise. He had also fallen into disgrace with the ship's cook.

Owing to the confused state of everything, the boys' first dinner was very meagre, and Butts took it very much to heart. The next forenoon he discovered a very large piece of beef lying near the galley, and the cook being absent for a moment, he shouldered it and dumped it into a boiler of soup. The cook just got sight of the beef sliding in from Butts' shoulder.

"What you doing, you red-headed lubber you," bawled the cook as he jumped for the boiler. With one foot upon a ringbolt in the deck and the other upon a mess bucket, he hooked violently after the beef and hauled it out all covered with little pieces of vegetables, not much the worse for its immersion.

"We didn't git dinner enough yisterday, and we're goin' to have our rations "

"What business have you to meddle with my cookin' anyway," pursued the angry cook. "You've got the cheek of a highwayman. You'll be taking command of the ship yet," and he made a fierce pass at Butts, who, to parry, covered his ears with his elbows. This was quite needless, as no officer or man is allowed to strike another in the service.

"Why don't you report him, old man, for destroying Government stores?" spoke up a lounge round the galley.

"Report him," exclaimed another, "you never gits no satisfaction for reportin' one of them little villins from the trainin' ships. They has no busi-

ness here, anyway. They's only sent here to be babied. They gits all the good billets away from we old men-of-warsmen who went though the war and done somethin' for the country. The scoolin' they's gittin' in the trainin' ships only sets 'em up, and they comes here to sarse us, and make us clean up after 'em."

"You're always jawin' and growlin', Billy, about the apprentices," spoke up the chief boatswain's mate who was friendly to the boys. "They's as good a right here as you has. If the Government gives 'em a better show nor it did us, they can't help it. Their smarter'n we be, an' they'll make better sea birds than us old gulls. The trouble is your gittin' water-logged, an' you don't like to see these new crafts a passin' on yer', Billy."

"You be blowed, Sam," said Billy as he turned on his heel and walked away.

All day long the men laughed over Butts' audacity. It was the richest thing in the world for men used to the most rigid surveillance and discipline to see orders and customs utterly ignored as in the case of Butts, who had already done a great deal more than to invert the barometer and offend the cook.

Joe was obliged to listen to a great many uncomplimentary remarks about the apprentice boys, and was glad to occasionally find a sturdy defender like the chief boatswain's mate whom he thanked for his kindly interference. While thinking over the

complaints he had been listening to and indignantly resenting them in his own mind, he caught the sound of other voices, which introduced an entirely different subject to his thoughts.

"I don't want to go to sea in this ship," an old line-of-battle man began. "Whenever you sees a ship go into commission union down, she'll never be heard from when she onc't gits to sea."

"On Friday too," chimed in another old croaker.

"Yes, on Friday too. There's them navy brigs as was lost. Jimmy Jawlin told me he seed the same thing happen to one of them. He jumped the first boat that went ashore. I'm too old a rat to be caught in a ship like this, if I could git ashore. You'd better go, boy," he said, turning to Joe, "if you have to swim for it."

"They says there's all kinds of yarns in New York about this ship," observed Dumpy Stubbs, as his shipmates called him. "I seen a piece in the papers myself that said as the carpenters had made such a botch with her that she wouldn't live through the first gale of wind."

"I can tell ye one thing I don't like," joined in Bobby Lanyard. "They say as there isn't a rat on board this ship exceptin' old Hay's tame one in the cage. Rats has the best reasons for not ship-pin'. The ship was launched on Friday as well as goin' into commission, an' two men was killed. All her accidents has happened on Friday, an' I dare say she'll sail on Friday."

"You'd better pack ye Rooshia leather bag, put ye gloves on and bundle ashore in the pilot boat if they's no other," broke in Dicky Dawson, who had been tugging away at a short-stemmed pipe, trying to make a spark catch which had shirked its duty in an unaccountable manner. "I's been in ships as was unlucky on other days nor Friday. I was wrecked onc't on a merchantman as was full o' rats. They came swimmin' round a raft we was on and clim up, so many on 'em, that we had to kick 'em off; I don't take no stock in no croakin'. When I ships, I ships as I gits married, for better or for worse."

"Hooray for you, Dicky," cried a dozen voices.

Just then the hands were piped to spread mess gear, and as this was Joe's duty for the week, he had to go.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ROUGH BUT WHOLESOME EXPERIENCES. OF HIS A

THE ship lay at Sandy Hook several days. The captain would not put to sea, with a new ship and a green crew, without first having things shaken down a little. When finally Joe heard the call, "All hands up anchor," his heart gave a big bound. Under the gigantic clutches of the steam windlass, the great cable was not long coming in, and while, to the quick music of fife and drum, the anchor was being catted, the ship slowly forged ahead under one bell.

The weather had come off very fine. The sea was sheeted with silver. Everything that had business out of port was under way, from fishing smack to steamer. It was sailing day for many of the great lines of ocean steamships, and a huge fleet of them were now passing the lightship. When they had gained a good offing, they separated like the scouts of an army, each one taking its own trackless course through the perils of the ocean wilderness. Soon they appeared mere puffs and patches of smoke against the horizon. These steamships, with all manner of sailing craft sweeping into view

as the ship gained the open sea, though a commonplace ocean sight, formed a charming picture to a young enthusiast like Joe, to whom it was all poetry.

The signal for a pilot boat was quickly sighted, and the pilot was hurried over the side. Orders had been given to haul fires, and to make sail. The ship was heading south by east, which meant, as the old sailors said, that the captain had decided to take the middle passage. Doughty, Little Sol, Butts and Joe had been, singularly enough, put in the same watch, in the same division, in the same gun's crew and in the same mess. They were in the starboard watch, but with the exception of Little Sol and Joe, who were maintop men, in different parts of the ship. Butts, whose nautical accomplishments would warrant nothing better, was put in the waist of the ship among the landsmen, whose duty it was to haul on ropes and attend to work on deck.

Little Sol and Joe had been the smartest topmen among the boys, and when they heard the order to make sail, they were of course anxious to do themselves credit. Joe had become an expert aloft under the tuition of Little Sol, and they sprang into the rigging as though the safety of the ship depended on their promptitude. They were the first to reach the top, and the first to lay out on the top-gallant yard, their station aloft.

Every inch of shroud and rope seemed to have a

friendly touch to Joe's hands and feet. He could not tell why it was, but everything about the ship seemed to be an old acquaintance; there seemed to be as much sympathy between him and his work as there is between the air and a bird's wing.

The surprisingly expeditious movements of the boys did not pass unobserved from the deck. The captain expressed his pleasure to his executive, and some of the able-bodied seamen looked askance at one another. Dicky Dawson remarked as he squinted his eyes at them, "Them college bred sailors is shaips aloft. They'll do, mebbe."

What a beautiful sight the ship was with nearly all her sails set! Everything that would draw had been shaken out. As she dipped to the swell, her acres of canvas gently pulling her along, Joe's sensations were of the liveliest character. Now he would gaze over the side at the swirling water, which came rushing from the bows in a million little eddies, then his eyes would wander aloft over the huge clouds of canvas, or out upon the wide reach of water flecked here and there with shining sails. So mysterious and grand did it all seem that the pleasure it gave him rose to exhilaration. Though he was but a common sailor, lost among the great crew of a large ship of war, still, boy as he was, he felt almost willing to have his identity swallowed up, if this strange, delicious harmony between him and everything around could continue.

This, more than anything else, is indeed the ro-

mance of the sea ; the illusion may be rudely dispelled a thousand times, yet it perpetually recurs when we behold a noble ship under full press of canvas cutting her beautiful swarth through a shining sea.

This, however, is no time for idle dreaming ; there is stern work before Master Joe. It would take weeks to get the ship into a proper condition for a man-of-war, and for days every spare moment from working the vessel was abundantly occupied. The boys were kept scraping spots of grease and tar out of the deck, or scraping the sides on boatswain's chairs preparatory to a fresh coat of paint, which the captain had decided to give her if the good weather continued. This latter was the most amusing work of all as every now and then a shark would turn up his white form, and show his frightful jaws. They tolled him along by throwing bits of meat and hardtack out. Once Hanson, who was beside Joe, nearly sent both of them, by his carelessness, to furnish the shark with a square meal. Joe shirked his work a little, it must be confessed, in order to fish for this monster. He secured a codhook, and with pork for bait and ropeyarn for a line, he cast out. In an instant his clumsy tackling was jerked from his hand, a second time nearly dislodging him from the boatswain's chair.

"What you doing over there?" sung out the second boatswain's mate of the watch, in time to prevent further sport and probable accident.

"We ain't doing anything," answered Joe.

"I guess you ain't, you lazy lubbers!"

"We ain't lazy lubbers."

"Don't you answer me back, you young scamp. I'll report you for disrespect."

"I'll report you for using 'reproachful language,'" promptly returned Joe.

There was a big laugh all round at Joe's quotation from the articles of war. The boatswain's mate went away muttering something about "them little blackguards from the training ships. I'll git even with 'em."

The mild weather in the gulf stream slackened the rigging, which had forthwith to be set up. The boats had to be fitted with canvas covers, and cushions, the oars leathered, and a hundred little things done which kept everybody irritated all day. The only rest was at night; so steady was the wind that the braces did not have to be manned more than twice in a watch, and the "second dog," as it is termed, from six to eight, and the first watch from eight to twelve were delightful. Joe always remembered these days and nights as in his young enthusiasm he at the time regarded them, the most glorious of his life.

The day's work over, universal cheerfulness prevailed among the crew. They were doing their best to make a good impression upon the officers, and upon one another. The story tellers were nightly bringing forward their best yarns; the musicians

formed in orchestra, and gave evening concerts in the fore-castle; the jig-dancers and the dramatic characters, by fits and starts, made known their gifts; the sea lawyers were busy in telling novices what they must do should complications arise between them and the paymaster or any other officer; in which event, according to these salt-water attorneys, the men would be always right and the officer always wrong.

When not diverted by these attractions, Joe would watch the great shadow of the ship upon the moonlit water, or take a peep at the compass, or with Doughty and Little Sol scan the horizon for lights of steamers and sailing vessels. The calls of the lookouts, and of the men stationed at the buoys; together with the cries of the men at the gangways; the eight o'clock reports to the executive from every part of the ship, of which he had to inform the captain immediately, had as much fascination for the boys as though the vessel had been a boyship, and they were playing at man-of-war.

The best discipline in the world is aboard a man-of-war. At night every boat, every gun, every sail, all machinery and gear must be in readiness for the remotest contingency. No matter what the emergency, should it be Old Neptune himself coming round in command of a fleet of Roman galleys, everything must be in proper trim to receive him.

The ship was to follow the Gulf Stream a thousand miles to secure the advantage of the current. The

captain upon consulting with the navigator determined to abandon his first plan of taking the middle passage, which would have enabled him to call at Madeira. Possibly he might pick up the Azores, those beautiful little gems of the Atlantic, but he was now intent on making a quick passage to Lisbon. Day and night the ship carried every stitch of canvas that would draw, and her log showed a wonderful record. Never had such a passage, under sail, been promised ; there was all the interest in the ship's speed among the officers and crew that would be seen at the Derby races.

One afternoon while Joe was taking his "trick" at the wheel, he heard the orderly report to the officer of the deck that the barometer was falling very rapidly. It was evident that a change of weather was about to take place. A heavy swell from the eastward kept the ship wallowing like a log, and sudden lulls in the wind caused the sails to flap against the masts at every pitch and roll of the vessel with the noise of thunder. Soon the wind freshened ; it came on in little puffs and sighs, as if very reluctant to interfere with the ship's arrangements, and not forgetting to put in that minor note of warning, so quickly understood, to make everything snug before the storm should burst.

Orders were soon given to take in the royals and top-gallant sails, and to take a reef in the topsails. This work done, the wind was rising so fast that all the head sails were taken in, with the exception of the foretop staysail and the foretopsail.

The wind soon hauled aft so that the ship was flung about without anything to steady her. She seemed to be trying to cut a huge figure eight in the water at every dip. This had its due effect upon Butts, who rushed forward from his station in the afterguard, saying as he was ordered back, "I won't stay here ; somethin's the matter with me."

Joe could see poor Doughty curled up abaft the mizzen mast. Something was the matter with him too. Butts's peculiar feelings seemed to strike all the boys on deck, excepting Joe and Little Sol, simultaneously. Little Sol as he came aft to man the main brace asked Joe in a very low voice, though he knew it was against orders to speak to the men at the wheel, if he felt *it* coming on. Joe understood perfectly what he meant by "it," and replied, "Not a bit."

He feared, however, that he would have to take his turn. The men at the wheel with him quietly chaffed him, but the more the ship tumbled about the better he felt. It happened that he was one of those fortunate few in whom all the fury of the sea cannot produce a qualm ; who, from causes as mysterious as the circulation of the blood, feel only exhilaration while others experience depression and torment.

A strong gale was blowing at eight bells. The ship had been made snug for the night ; the only sails she carried were the foretop-mast staysail, and the main topsail, close reefed. Lofty seas came rolling down upon her, over which she plunged and tumbled

like some great sporting monster. Little Sol and Joe, and finally Doughty, who had braced up wonderfully the last hour, stood in the forecastle watching the stately march of the huge combers over which the ship careened at a speed of thirteen knots. Groups of men were seeking to make themselves comfortable under the break of the lee hammock nettings.

"If we don't git enough of this afore morning, then my name isn't Jack Robinson," observed that old tar as he tried to steady himself to have out his smoke.

"I guess them accounts in the papers will come true," spoke up some one else. "I've jest come from aft ; the captain's ordered up the storm sails ; they say the bottom has fell out of the barometer, it's gone down so the last hour. Wouldn't this be a nice night for a fire," he continued, as an extra heavy blast flung a shower of spray clear into the tops.

"I don't like them guns worryin' so on their carriages. Hear that big feller rub and grind now," another speaker observed of a gun just aft of Joe.

This was only a knot of croakers ; every ship has such. Others were quite cheerful. Sheltered from the wind and spray they told stories and sang songs. Old Stevens, the signal quartermaster, full of wisdom on all sea subjects, as well as everything else, was holding forth on the wonders of the gulf stream. He was aware, he said, that many of his ideas did

not agree with the highest authorities, but why should not he be right; he'd sailed and sounded in it for forty years.

Joe and Little Sol lashed about twenty hammocks at one bell for the boys too sick to help themselves. By much persuasion they got Butts into his hammock. He was curled up like a porcupine behind a gun, and was quite as irritable when Joe roused him. He called Joe a "fool," and used several other epithets peculiar to Yankee dialect.

Soon the watch below was quiet, but not asleep. Occasionally a heavy roll would start up a medley of sounds that can only be likened to the crash of a thunderstorm in the Rocky Mountains. Bulkheads groaned, doors banged, dishes smashed, some loose lumber was in a perfect rage with itself, the great guns worked and grumbled. In all his born days Joe had never heard such a babel of sounds.

Under other circumstances he would have been amused at what he saw. His hammock swung in the last tier aft, and whenever the wardroom door flew open, he had a full view of the wardroom country. The navigating officer was the only one who had not turned in. He had braced himself comfortably on the sofa, which immediately carried away, landing its occupant squarely in the middle of the chaplain's room. Then a keg of molasses broke adrift from the pantry and came waltzing forward distributing its contents over the deck. The navigating officer started after it, but the keg had

the advantage of the race as it was reckless of all bruises it might receive. Finally the door slammed to just as the officer's feet slipped in a pool of molasses, and he sat down on the keg, as Joe had often done on a rolling barrel.

All hands were called to heave the ship to a half-hour later. How the boys lamented the miserable fate which had sent them there, as they scrambled round under their hammocks after their shoes! Joe heard Butts tell the petty officer who was turning out the delinquents that he would not turn out.

"You won't, eh!" and Joe got a glimpse of poor Butts standing so nearly on his head that it would take a plumb-line to tell the difference.

They crawled, or rather climbed, up the hatchways, which were now being battened down. Everything was in a grand whirl. The orders were being rapidly given to get the ship ready to come round, the order "Hard a starboard!" was shouted through the speaking trumpet, and the vessel swung into the trough of the sea. Unluckily she failed from some cause to come quickly up into the wind, and in a moment a huge sea came tearing over her bulwarks. Boats were stove in, gratings, halyard racks, all loose gear with men and boys were swept promiscuously aft. Joe saw the white top of the comber glimmering far above the railing, and its monstrous height caused him instinctively to lay hold of a rope which was fast to a belaying-pin. As he did so, the water came surging and bubbling about him.

His feet swept out, and he felt somebody clutch them with a spasmodic movement which nearly broke his hold. The ship instantly lifted as she came into the wind, and the water rushed aft carrying away one man at the wheel, and smashing in the cabin bulkhead. When Joe got righted, he saw in the dim outline that it was the lieutenant of his division who had laid hold of him with so little ceremony. "Good for you, my boy, you did me a good turn this time," he said, as he rushed away to look after his men.

As if the sea which had just come aboard had not made sufficient havoc, just then came the cry of fire from the gun deck. This sent consternation through the ship, but did not create a panic, except among the younger boys. Every man of the watch below, and all who could be spared from the watch on deck, jumped for their stations. At first nobody knew where the fire was, and the smoke was quite dense before it was found to issue from the sail room.

Joe's station was at the forward berth deck pump where the smoke was almost suffocating. From the sounds which came from the sail room, he knew that it must be a very bad fire, and he wondered, should they be obliged to take to the boats, if they could live in such an awful night. Every moment messengers were running with reports to the captain, who amid all the hubbub had kept his station on the bridge. The executive officer was as near

the sail room as he could get, giving orders, and fighting the advancing fire.

"That's the wickedest-looking fire I ever saw in a ship," one of the men sung out as he ran aft after a bucket.

"I'm almost scared to death," said a little chap, who was pumping at Joe's side, or pretending to.

"The ship will flounder, I know she will," Gabriel got off between his jerks at the pump.

"They've got round it," called out another messenger as he zigzagged past on his way to report to the captain.

Just as this news passed forward a great crash in the forecastle indicated that something very unusual had happened there. The ship had fallen off a little and was thrown almost on her beam ends. As a result, one of the forecastle guns carried away. Here was a nice mess. A big fire raging in the sail room, and only half conquered, the deck littered with wrecked gear, and now a great gun gone adrift — almost the worst accident that can happen on board a man-of-war.

CHAPTER XIX.

A FORECASTLE SCARE.

A MIDSHIPMAN came rushing forward on the berth deck. He delivered a hurried message to the executive, stating that the captain desired him to come immediately on deck, leaving a lieutenant in charge of the fire.

No sooner had the executive and the midshipman disappeared than a loud call came ringing down the hatches for one half of the pump's crew to hasten on deck, bringing their hammocks with them. The boys who were working at the pumps were greatly alarmed at this order, having got it into their heads that a terrible collision had taken place. For a few moments a panic seemed inevitable among them, but the older hands kept a sharp eye on them, not allowing one of them for an instant to leave his station.

The master-at-arms detailed one half the men and boys, leaving the pumps sufficiently manned for the present. Those ordered on deck made a grand rush for their hammocks, utterly mystified as to the meaning of such an order. Joe happened to be in the detail, and he struggled through the mass of

men and boys who blocked the hatchways to where his hammock swung. Several of the most frightened among the boys besought him to tell them if he thought the ship was going to be lost, and if he thought they'd have to use their hammocks as life preservers.

"No, I don't," Joe answered, tugging at the hard knot which had formed on his hammock hook. "If she was going to be lost this is no time for us to get scared. Don't be babies."

The knot proved unyielding and Joe quickly settled the matter with his knife. The boys, considerably reassured by his tone and pluck, followed him on deck; not knowing but the next minute they would be ordered to jump overboard with their hammocks.

"This way, all hammocks," called several voices from the forecastle. By persistent holding on and climbing, for the deck was a mass of wrecked gear, the boys got into the forecastle. Several lanterns were glancing back and forth, in whose dim light some hundred or more of the crew could be seen, keeping a respectful distance from a black space just forward, each man poising his hammock about as an old whaler would his harpoon.

Getting far enough forward, Joe quickly ascertained the cause of all this confusion. The vacant space, of which everybody seemed so distrustful, was occupied by a monster gun, which had broken away from its carriage and attachments. It had

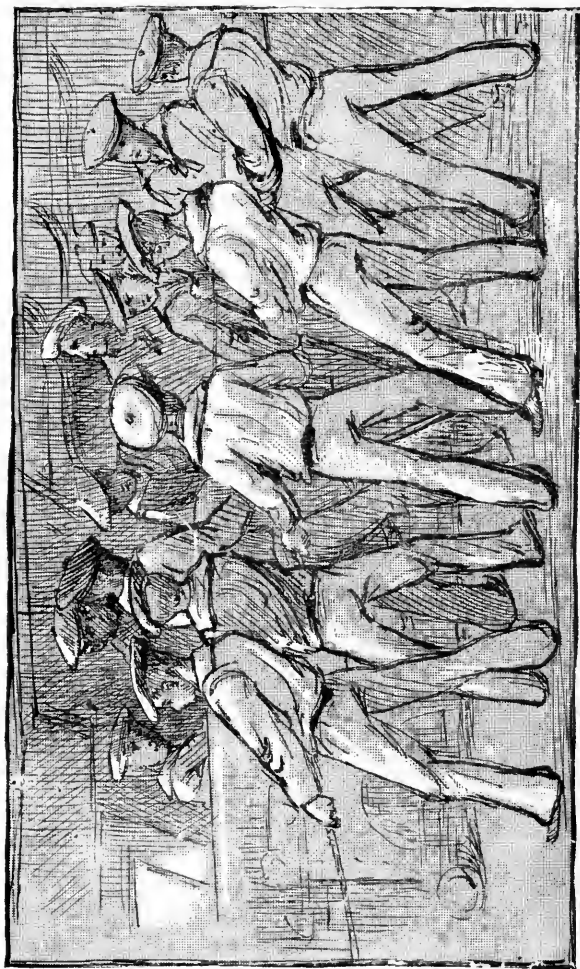
gone ploughing up the deck in a frightful manner, being kept from going overboard by the heavy bulwarks, and from working its way through the deck by the solid oak framework beneath. Like a bull just entering a Spanish ring, for the moment it was complete master of the forecastle.

"Lively there, men!" shouted the executive. "Fling your hammocks in on both sides of it."

A shower of hammocks followed this order, to which the gun seemed to pay no more heed than a rolling horse would to prairie grass. The object was to stow so many hammocks around the refractory gun that it would be thoroughly smothered and imbedded in them; an expedient always the most successful in such an urgent case. The ship from some cause had fallen off and was rolling at a fearful rate, in which the gun seemed to take a wild delight. The mad evolutions of the gun kept the men at long range, so that many of the hammocks went wide of the mark. By this time too, many square yards of deck lay a mass of splinters, the huge trunnions of the gun breaking up the wood like a crushing machine.

"Get up to it, and stuff them in," said the executive.

Joe was the first to obey this order. He plumped his hammock down squarely at right angles with the gun as it turned over, and sprang back in time for Little Sol to repeat the act. The boys, encouraged by Joe and Little Sol, jumped nimbly forward,



RUNNING IN.

and deposited their hammocks in the same manner. Meanwhile the ship had been somewhat steadied by coming up into the wind again so that after this successful sally on the part of the boys, it was an easy matter to build such a wall of hammocks around the gun that by rolling upon the ends of the bottom layers, and holding them firmly by its own immense weight, a foundation was secured, which in a little while formed of the great pile an effectual barrier. There was a feeling of great relief visible upon the countenances of all as the gun lay as quiet as a sleeping giant, and promised as humble submission as that same giant would be weighted down with heavy chains.

The fire had been well nigh forgotten in the greater anxiety excited by the last accident, and it was not yet subdued. A strong watch was quickly stationed over the gun, and all who could be spared from the deck were ordered to relieve the men at the pumps. They were very glad of their relief, for in addition to the suspense they had been in, the smoke was almost insufferable. Under the sturdy strokes of the fresh pumpmen, and the excellent management of the officer in charge, the fire was soon brought under perfect control. Huge rolls of smoking canvas and steaming chests of small stores were thrown out of the sail room when the men were able to go inside, and surrounding bulkheads were cut away so that the smallest hiding place for the fire was shut off. An hour more

the pumping was belayed, and the place of the fire left in charge of a responsible watch.

Things were now tolerably secure, but the ship was very uncomfortable. Whenever she rolled streams of water poured down her lower hatchways, which sounded as if the whole sea were deluging the vessel. Everybody stood in water over his ankles, and was thoroughly soaked by the cataracts falling through every open place from above. Not a man among them all really growled. Sailors always do their growling when there is nothing to growl about. Bobby Lanyard was the only remonstrant, if such indeed he could be called. He perched himself upon a messchest to let the water run out of his shoes, and sung out, "Hooray for farmin'! When this cruise is up, I'm goin' to the 'Roostik where Bently lives."

Joe was kept below on watch until morning; then being relieved by Butts, who had spent two dismal hours off trying to make himself comfortable on top of a chest, he went on deck. It was a sight to behold. Several boats that were inboard had been carried away from their cradles and were jammed in athwart ships. Pieces of broken railing, halyard racks, gratings, chests, oars, torpedo booms, and an endless variety of articles which had been left on deck waiting to be stored below were twisted together in the oddest confusion. The closest resemblance Joe had ever seen was an immense junk establishment he had peeped into in Boston.

The mountain of hammocks in the forecastle looked like a volcanic upheaval, with the gun at the bottom of the crater like a great mass of cold black lava.

By dint of a good deal of climbing Joe worked his way over to where Dicky Dawson was viewing the wreckage. Dicky stood looking it over a good deal as a merchant would scan the ruins of his warehouse which had gone down uninsured the night before. Dicky was sorrowing, however, over the loss it would be to him in work, rather than over the destruction of the property. Approaching him Joe asked if such things were common in the Navy.

"They is and they isn't. I can't say nor I ever seen a much worse night, nor a worse-lookin' deck," replied Dicky, looking ruefully around him; an old man-of-wars-man like Dicky always keeps things in order by never allowing them to get into disorder. "One time last night I didn't know but we'd have to abandon ship; but if we'd a tried I don't believe we could 'ave got away."

"Why?"

"Because the boats are all stove but one. If they hadn't been we never could 'ave lowered.

"Which boat wasn't stove?"

"The one as I'm coxswain of, the second cutter."

"Why, I've been put in that boat's crew."

"You 'ave, eh!" and Dicky frowned upon poor Joc. "I'm sorry for it," he frankly added.

"Why?" inquired our hero in a crestfallen tone, for he had conceived a strong liking for Dicky Dawson.

"Because I don't want no boys."

"But Doughty and I are the only boys you've got, and we pulled the best oar of any one in the training ship," Joe responded, with a flush of conscious pride.

"Boys is very onsart'in. The best on 'em is lazy and tricky. If I had ye in the merchant service, I'd 'ave hopes on ye."

"How's that?"

"O, I could encourage ye in the performance of yer dootys!"

"Can't you do that here?" innocently pursued Joe.

"No; our little privileges is cut off in the Navy," and Dicky looked wistfully at the sole of his shoe, while he thrust his fist into the foreground.

Joe would have felt outraged if Dicky hadn't grinned as he made this last observation. He saw that it was chiefly bluster on Dicky's part, and his ears had been so deluged with that since he came to the ship that he didn't mind it much.

"If ye belongs to me, I've got a job for you in the boat," Dicky resumed; "if anything should happen, that boat's the only one fiten to lower."

"You don't think anything more's going to happen, do you?" inquired Joe, as they climbed with some difficulty out over the davits into the boat.

"How do ye 'spose I know? You must learn not to ask green questions, so's nobody'll make fun on ye. It's our bisniss to be ready for anythin'. A man might fall overboard, or we might have to lower to go aboard a ship in distress. Strange things is allers happenin' at sea."

Things were lively all the morning. The decks had to be cleared of their litter, and the gun secured with a solid framework as heavily packed with dead-wood as a ship's stern. By means of a heavy tackle attached to the yard arm, the boats were hoisted back to their places beside the smoke-stack; it was wonderful to see how quickly nearly every vestige of the night's disaster was cleared away. This done the ship was again put on her course and bounded over the still high seas like a perfect water-witch. The water surged and boiled and flew in sheets of spray as she breasted the great billows, breaking over the bulwarks and gurgling through the scuppers, flooding the decks so that everybody stood in water over his shoes.

Never in all his life had Joe felt so exhilarated. He stood in the forecastle in his oilskins and rubber boots letting the spray fly over him while he watched the foaming seas, or hauled on sheets or halyards or braces just enough to bring the blood tingling to his cheeks. He felt glad of the dangerous experiences of the night before, for he wished to know all about this wild life of the sea upon which he had entered with so much enth

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siasm and resolution. As it proved he was destined to pass through several of the most thrilling experiences that come in a sailor's life; the events of years being compressed into the history of a few days.

He was engaged in turning over in his mind little reminiscences of the past night, wondering what would happen next, when a loud cry of "Sail ho!" from the lookout at the masthead sent him to the railing. It was the first sail that had been sighted in many days.

"Where away?" called the officer of the deck.

"Two points on the weather bow, sir."

"Can you make her out?"

"Looks like a bark under bare poles, sir."

The quartermaster swept the horizon with his glass, and all hands strained their eyes, but the vessel could only be seen from the masthead. As the ship was logging eleven knots it was not long before she picked up the bark's spars, and shortly after her hull hove in view. As reported, she was under bare poles, but a faint speck was visible at her mizzen.

"Quartermaster, can you make out that signal at the mizzen?" called the captain from the bridge.

"It's her colors, union down, sir, I can't just make them out."

"She's in distress," the captain was heard to say; "we'll bear down upon her and see what she wants."

In about half an hour the ship was hove to

within a mile or so of the bark, and an international signal ran up. The bark was flying the Italian merchant colors, which was the captain's reason for using the international signal code. The interrogative which had been hauled to the peak, read, "Can we assist you?"

An answer, after a long time, was run up to the bark's mizzen, reading, "Out of water."

It seemed an impossible task to get water to the bark in such a raging sea, and the captain appeared in a dilemma. He was a very brave, but exceedingly careful man. Should he accede to the bark's request, he would imperil the lives of the bravest of his crew; yet he could not endure the thought that he had abandoned a vessel in distress at sea. He concluded to wait and see if the wind and sea would not fall.

It appeared very strange to him also that the bark should lie wallowing about, with every stitch of canvas taken in, begging for water, when twenty-four hours' run would bring her in the track of Spanish and Portuguese fruiters from the Azores, and most probably into smooth water. But she was in distress, and that was sufficient.

Meanwhile he ordered up two casks of water from below, and directed the carpenter to construct a raft upon which the casks were firmly lashed and thrown over the stern. A long line kept the raft in tow. There being no perceptible change in the wind, and the day fast wearing away, the captain at

last decided to send a boat, and called for volunteers.

The midshipman of Joe's watch promptly offered himself as officer of the boat. He was an athletic, manly fellow. He had been in many dangers, and had the reputation in the Navy of being one of the most daring as well as one of the coolest-headed young officers in it. Dicky Dawson, one of the best coxswains, and bravest seamen in the ship, followed at the midshipman's heels. Several strapping young seamen came next, and after them Joe and Doughty.

"Do you think it best to let those boys go, sir?" said the executive to the captain.

"I beg pardon, sir," respectfully remarked Dicky Dawson, "them boys can't pull no oar."

"We belong to the boat's crew, sir," modestly spoke up Joe, "and would like very much to go in her. We pulled the best oar in the training ship. We'd like to stand by our boat, sir."

The captain looked at Doughty's sturdy physique and at Joe's lithe form, and pondering a moment, said, "Yes, they may go; I believe in giving boys responsibility."

CHAPTER XX.

A HAZARDOUS EXPEDITION.

IT took but a few moments to fit out the boat. Dicky Dawson had anticipated just such an emergency as this in having all the ordinary belongings of the boat in her. It was only necessary to add a breaker of fresh water, a bag of sea biscuit, medical stores, and a few navigation instruments to give her an admirable equipment. As an extra precaution, however, the captain ordered that a lantern with a box of safety matches, and a few blue-lights and hand rockets be put in, for it was now getting on in the afternoon, and they might not get back to the ship before evening.

All ready for lowering, her officers and crew boarded her at the davits. We neglected to mention that the assistant surgeon, a gallant and intrepid young fellow, had also offered himself as a member of the party. A line from the fore part of the ship was made fast to the cutter's bows to steady her, or to prevent her from going adrift if her tackles should be prematurely unhooked, or should be carried away. Dicky Dawson kept his hand firmly on the rudder head, so that when the boat struck the

water the rudder could not be unshipped. Joe, and an ordinary seaman named Finburn, were armed with boathooks to keep the cutter from swaying against the ship's side.

It was very nice work lowering a boat upon seas that came well-nigh to the railing. By unhooking the falls at either end of the boat too soon, a roll of the ship might leave the cutter dangling in the air, thus spilling her crew into the sea; or, what would be worse, swing the boat round under the ship as she swept to leeward in a heavy roll, to be instantly engulfed. The many dangers could be averted only by the steadiest nerves and the sharpest attention.

The cutter struck the water on the declivity of a sea, and began those jerks which can only be compared to an express train at full speed off the rails. Joe was in the bow of the boat, and never had he had such a scrabble to keep his feet. Several of the crew went plump into the bottom, and Doughty was knocked over so that he fell across the thwarts, and was saved from pitching overboard by a timely grasp of the assistant surgeon. "Keep her off there," the officer of the boat shouted as the slings were unhooked, and Joe and Finburn planted their boathooks against the ship's side. A moment more the line was cast off, and she rose and fell to the waves with the freedom of a seabird. It had been an unusually successful performance, and the boat was cheered from the ship.

Dicky Dawson was a tried old seaman who knew how to handle a boat in any sea, from a Jersey surf to a mid-Atlantic comber. Many a gale had he ridden out in an open boat to leeward of a raft which broke the sea, thus creating a little haven in the ocean's bosom. Boats had been swamped all around him, while he had lived to tell the story of shipwrecks, which, but for him, would never have been told. He had made two cruises with the present captain, who felt perfectly safe in trusting his young officers and seamen in a boat of which Dicky Dawson was coxswain.

Dicky brought the boat round upon her course. The line of the water raft was cast off and made fast to her stern. The ship had been hove to, so that it brought the bark to leeward, otherwise a crew of giants could not have reached her with the raft. The last orders shouted over the ship's stern were, "You are not to attempt to board the bark unless you consider it absolutely necessary," and the perilous pull began.

It seemed a grand, though almost terrible thing to Joe to be down among the seas, where he could reach out his hand and seize their white manes; to slide down their sides into the deep hollows, from which not a thing could be seen of the ship, and where the vast hills of water on either side threatened to tumble over upon each other, making the valley in which the boat struggled her grave. Looking out upon the sea from the deck

of a ship was very different from being lost among the great billows like a traveller in the heart of the Alps.

The boat rode the seas grandly. The great danger now lay in not keeping an equable strain upon the line. A too sudden tightening would check the progress of the boat and bring a sea tumbling in astern or break the line, in which case the raft, as in the other case the boat, would be lost. A steady, even stroke with an occasional "Give way strong, my hearties," from Dicky Dawson as he saw too much slack coming in the line, sent them over the seas as if every stroke were timed to the regular march of the waves. An hour's pull and the bark was within hailing distance.

Her captain stood upon the poop, while some half-dozen men clung to her mizzen rigging. They were there apparently for the purpose of watching the progress of the boat. As the cutter rounded to, to leeward of the bark, a line was thrown to her with which she was made fast; and with the force of the sea broken by the vessel she rode quite comfortably with her tow. Everybody in the bark looked at the raft in bewilderment, evidently thinking, as after events showed, that it had been brought to take on board any of the crew in excess of the number the boat could carry. They must have been amused as well as alarmed at the prospect of being towed alongside the American ship bestride two barrels.

"Stand by to give us another line," shouted the midshipman, a little nettled at the inactivity and stupidity on board the bark.

"Me no speak English," returned the captain; "Italian," and he pointed to the colors.

Addressing him in French, the midshipman asked him if he could speak that language, and received the answer, "Oui, Monsieur."

"We've brought you some water; throw us another line."

The captain looking dazed, the midshipman continued, "Didn't you signal for water?"

"No, no, Monsieur! we signalled, 'Too much water.' The bark is foundering."

On account of the extreme caution that had been necessary in managing the boat nobody had given special attention to the bark. When the midshipman interpreted the captain's reply to his last question, a glance sufficed to reveal the true condition of distress. The bark lay almost completely waterlogged. Not that the midshipman and Dicky Dawson had not noticed this some distance off, but they had attributed the vessel's low position in the water to the cargo, it being no uncommon thing at sea to meet vessels loaded almost to the water's edge. The bark had lost all her boats, her starboard bow above the water line had been stove in as by a collision, and much of her top gear had been carried away. Waterlogged as she was, she was lifted by the great seas and tossed about as if

she had been a feather ; they indeed seemed making her their sport previous to swallowing her up forever.

" We must be taken off very soon," suggested the captain ; " she's settling every minute."

" Do you think we can get alongside, Dawson ? " said the midshipman.

" I'll put her there if you says so, sir. If the bark happens to flop over with us at her railin', sir, we'll go to Davy Jones with them Dagoes."

" How shall we take them off, then ? "

" Let 'em jump overboard, sir, and we'll fish for 'em. Their hair's as long as a Chinese cow."

Dicky probably meant cue, but there was no time for explanation.

" We can't come alongside, sir," the midshipman called, as a result of his conference with Dicky ; " order your men to swim for us."

The captain quickly saw that this was the most feasible method of getting from the foundering bark, and he gave the nearest man an order to throw himself into the sea. The man would not stir. He evidently thought he would have to get on to the raft. The captain gave each of the six men the order ; not one would obey it. The captain expostulated and acted as if he would shortly drive them overboard with a belaying-pin, that common and powerful instrument for enforcing obedience on board merchantmen, but the men held on to the rigging.

"Perhaps if you'd jump in yourself, sir," called the boat officer, "they'd follow your example."

The captain shook his head, which was attributed to cowardice on his part, by the boat's crew, though unwarrantably so.

Doughty could see by Joe's eyes that he was struggling with the matter, and was not surprised to hear him presently ask the midshipman to let him swim to the bark and return to the boat to show them how it could be done. "I'm a first-class swimmer, sir," he boastfully urged.

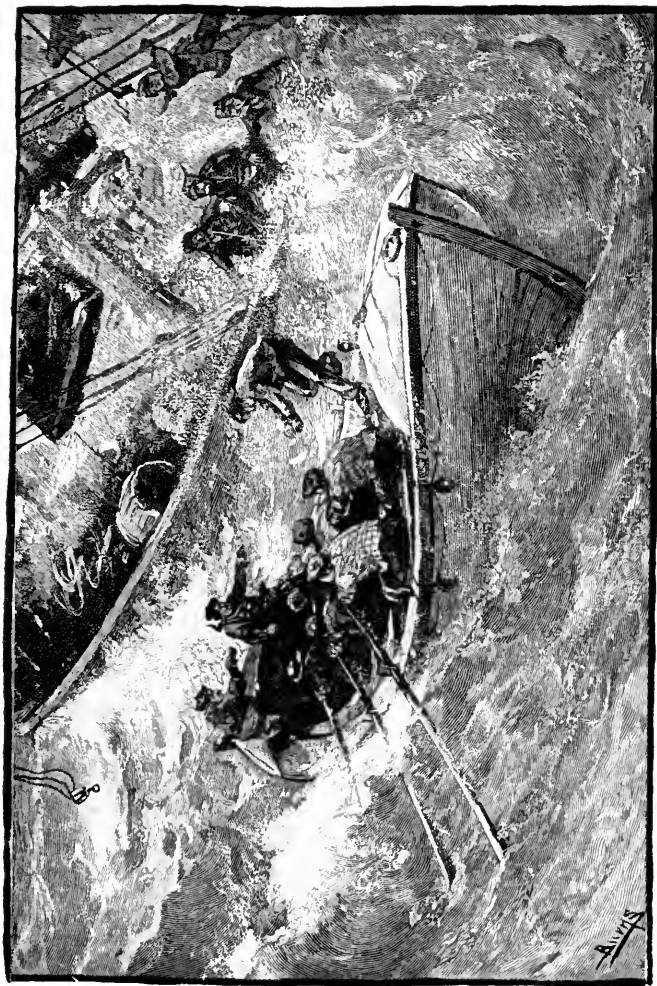
"No; you'll stay in the boat," said the midshipman. "The captain's either a coward or can't swim. Something's got to be done. Who's the man to go? I'll go myself," he quickly added.

Hastily divesting himself, he plunged into the sea. He struck out with the utmost coolness, as though he were in nothing more than a surf at Coney Island. He was a magnificent swimmer, and flung himself like a dolphin over the crests of the seas. Joe's eyes fairly flashed as he watched his progress, while at the same time there was a look of sincere regret in his face that he had not been allowed to go. The midshipman prospected a little to find a good place for boarding, and presently shot over the railing at the summit of a foaming sea, just as the bark gave a tremendous lurch to windward. It was a very clever exploit, and the midshipman cannot to this day explain how it was done.

He stood a moment in consultation with the captain, who then addressed his men. He told them that the young *Americana* had come to the bark to inspire them with courage, and he—their captain—did not wish to be further mortified by their cowardice. The midshipman then learned that the captain, like a true officer, would not leave his vessel until the last man had been rescued. The men then explained the real cause of their holding back, which was fear of the raft. They would rather take their chances on the bark than on the raft. The captain and midshipman could not help smiling at this, and quickly explained the true purpose of the raft.

Finally, the second mate—the first mate with several men had been washed overboard—leaped into the sea, and struck out gallantly for the boat. He was hauled in uninjured, but badly frightened, as he nearly went under in the swirl of a big sea. His example was followed by the other men, who were all swimmers, in rapid succession. The captain and the midshipman were the last to strike out, and in a few minutes they were safely on board the cutter, and the boat prepared for her return.

Not a minute could now be spared. The boat was heavily laden, and it was getting late in the afternoon. The midshipman looked at his watch, and was startled to find that he had scarcely an hour left before dark. Carefully adjusting the weights in the boat, and consulting a moment with



RESCUING THE CREW OF THE BARK.

the doctor and the coxswain, he gave the order to cut away the line by which the raft was still attached to the boat, and to cast off the line from the bark.

The ship bore from the bark east by north half north, which brought wind and sea dead ahead. The only thing in their favor was a slight fall in the wind; but it had made no perceptible difference as yet in the height or confusion of the seas.

A strong, slow stroke lifted them to the combers whose snowy tops swept over them in clouds of spray. Little did the oarsmen care for this as shielded by their oilskin suits and tarpaulins they bent their backs to the stroke. But the occupants of the stern sheets were nearly blinded by the watery pellets which the wind now and again drove into their faces with a carnival-like license.

Joe could see that Dicky Dawson was very uneasy about something besides the surf. He kept turning his head to windward, and looking off to the horizon with that peering gaze which recognizes some special danger. Then he would cast his eyes on the ship as if mentally calculating the number of strokes which would be necessary to bring them alongside. The boat was in truth making but little headway. Joe was astonished to see the bark receding so slowly, when the cutter appeared to be fairly leaping over the seas. Presently Dicky called the attention of the boat officer to his observations.

"I don't like the looks o' that low line, sir, coming up to port. It has the 'pearance o' one o' them fog banks they has round here."

"It can't be," said the doctor. "We're out of the latitude of fogs."

"There are very few latitudes in the North Atlantic where there are no fogs," the midshipman remarked. "That's a fog bank, sure enough, and it's moving very rapidly, too."

He had not much more than looked at the ship and at the compass when down came the fog, shutting them completely in. It was not one of those ocean mists, but one of those great cloaks which the Atlantic is so fond of throwing over its shoulders as if to protect itself from the chills.

"It's lucky we've got a compass, Doughty," said Joe, leaning far forward, and speaking in Doughty's ear; "and provisions and water enough to last twenty-four hours, in case we lose the ship. I heard the coxswain say so."

"It will be terrible if we have to spend the night in this open boat. There's no telling what may happen," returned Doughty with considerable alarm.

The shriek of a fog whistle, way off to starboard, almost caused the crew to rest on their oars.

"Surely that can't be our ship," said the officer of the boat. "It must be a big steamer. Keep a sharp lookout for her; she may cut us down."

"That's no steamer, sir. I knows the sound of a man-o'-war whistle," observed Dicky.

"But the ship doesn't bear from that direction at all."

The sharp detonation of a saluting piece, from about the same quarter, convinced the boat officer that the sounds emanated from the ship, but he seemed utterly bewildered.

"Do you think the compass can be out, doctor, or is it a deflection of the sound?"

"It may be something of both. I don't have much confidence in boat's compasses. They're generally old and quite worthless."

"What do you think, Dawson; had we better change our course in the direction of the sound, or follow the compass?"

"I'd trust my ears quicker'n I would my eyes, sir. I believes in sich things as ocular delusions; my compass in a fog is allers my sense o' hearin', sir."

But the officer of the boat knew, and the doctor agreed with him, that in case the cutter lost the ship, should her course be changed to the quarter from which the firing seemed to come, he would be held responsible for not standing by his compass. He therefore said, "Keep her on her course, Dawson — east by north half north."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said Dicky.

CHAPTER XXI.

LOST IN THE CUTTER.

THE fog had been observed from the ship with considerable alarm. Every glass had been in requisition, and from the time the boat set out until the fog lowered, her every movement had been closely watched.

The interest was intense as she started to return ; it was questioned whether she could live with such a load, in such a sea. Every time she shot into the hollow of the great seas the spectators waited in breathless suspense to see her white prow thrown into view again as she rose to the tops of the waves scarcely to be distinguished from the yeasty mass in which she struggled. But on she came, a perfect water sprite, tossing the foam about in a kind of wild ecstasy.

"Don't you think we had better drop down and pick her up, sir?" said the executive to the captain. "She has a very dangerous load. I can't comprehend why he took off that crew."

"I hardly think it best. The ship is making considerable leeway, and if we get much nearer we may run afoul of the bark."

"There's a heavy fog bank to starboard, sir ; it seems to be coming up quite rapidly," replied the quartermaster.

"In that case we'll have to change our position," said the captain, seizing a glass and quickly satisfying himself of the correctness of the quartermaster's observation. "Have up a dozen rounds, sir, and get the saluting pieces ready. See also if the fog whistle can be used."

A quick order from the officer of the deck, who stood by the captain, trumpet in hand, sent everybody to the halyards and braces ; in a few moments the ship swung round to her new course, her canvas filling just as the fog came rolling, a kind of white darkness, down upon them.

The action of the captain was necessary. Vessels near each other at sea in the relative positions of the bark and frigate, like two adjacent pieces of driftwood upon a pond, have a strong tendency to approach each other. No good captain would allow himself to windward of a wreck, in a dense fog, with half a gale of wind blowing, and currents, he knows not how many, sweeping him down to a possible collision.

The movements on board the frigate failed to attract the attention of the boat's crew, the fog enveloping them just as the vessel filled away. Their surprise may be conceived when the firing was heard many points from the course they were steering, and their conclusion, that the sounds were

deflected, by contact with different strata of air, from their true course, is not to be wondered at.

Night fell upon the bewildered and baffled crew. The whistling had ceased, but every few minutes a heavy report rolled over the water in a series of reverberations from what direction nobody could exactly tell. No doubt the fog, together with the peculiar atmospheric conditions, dissipated the sound waves so that the reports might have come from any point of the compass.

As darkness shut in, the little boat had reached the point where the ship should have been found, but she seemed farther away than ever. The gallant crew were thoroughly exhausted, and in consequence, considerably dispirited. Ordering the oars all in except the two bow oars, which were necessary to keep the cutter head on to the sea, the officer of the boat proceeded to serve out a ration. He was surprised to find stores in the boat whose existence there he had not the slightest reason to suspect.

"Where did all these provisions come from?" he asked of Dawson.

"I allers keeps my boats full o' grub, sir, at sea. There's no tellin' what's goin' to happen. There's somethin' more delicit under the seat, for you and the doctor, sir, if you'd like it."

"No, thank you, Dawson. We all fare alike on an expedition like this."

While the crew munched their hardtack, drink-

ing from their own breaker, having meanwhile found another for the Italians, whose appearance corresponded so well with that of the ragpickers and organ-grinders among their more unfortunate countrymen, that the boat's crew were obliged to forego their usual freedom of hospitality, the midshipman had to listen to the account of the loss of the bark. It appeared that she was bound up the Clyde after a cargo of steel armor for a new Italian iron-clad, which was building at Spezia, when she was cut down in the night, probably by a coasting steamer. The bark's lights were all up and well trimmed, but the night was dark and foggy. Nothing was seen but the faintest outline of the great steamer, as for an instant she loomed alongside; then the terrible crash came. Had the steamer struck but a few feet farther amidships, the bark must have instantly gone to the bottom; a strong compartment in the bows saved her. The worst of all was the heartlessness of the steamer's captain. Without making an inquiry, or even slowing down, having struck the bark a glancing blow, he kept on his course. "Many a steamship," concluded the captain with flashing eyes, "is sailing the seas red with the blood of murdered sailors."

"Them Dagoes is snatchin' from one another, sir," burst out Dicky. "That boss robber there is heelin' the boat over."

Dicky's rough perceptions had discovered, by daylight, in the external economy of the one to whom

he referred as a bandit all the requisites of that profession. The man had risen up and was struggling with one of his comrades to get away his hardtack.

"Get down in the boat, you beggar," shouted the midshipman, very angry, as the starboard gunwale went under, dipping in several gallons of water.

A sharp Italian reprimand from the man's captain had more effect than the midshipman's vigorous English. The Italians were indeed very hungry, having had but little to eat for several days, and no water at all to drink. If left to themselves, they would have swamped the boat in their struggles to get one another's rations. Joe, observing the voracity of the one nearest him jammed in between the seats, out of the kindness of his heart, shared his portion with him.

The brief respite from the heavy pulling, together with the hardtack and water, had a somewhat cheering effect upon the whole boat's company. The firing now seemed exactly off the starboard beam, if anywhere at all. It had, indeed, been growing somewhat indistinct, and everybody was now satisfied that the ship had changed her position, and they had been getting farther and farther away from her. If the fog would only lift, they could burn their blue lights and send up their rockets, thus signaling their position; or, the ship's lights might be seen; and if not her lights, the rockets she would be sure to send up. Of course

any attempt to signal in the fog would be futile.

"I've given the compass a fair show," said the midshipman when the crew had finished their meagre supper. "I'll run for the signals now. Sorry I didn't follow your advice in the first place, Dawson. How do you think it would do to get up the foremast and put her under sail?"

"I don't think it 'ud do, sir, in this breeze. She couldn't carry a rag bigger'n your hand. We'd 'ave to run close hauled, or afore it, an' we'd lose more time in tackin' nor we'd gain in runnin'. Oars and propellers is the best sails, sir, in thick weather like this is."

Dicky's long experience entitled his judgment to the profoundest respect, and the midshipman decided not to experiment with the sails. He relieved Joe and Doughty at the oars by putting two of the stoutest of the Italians in their places, and assigned them to duty as lookouts, Joe in the bows and Doughty in the after part of the boat. They were cautioned to keep a sharp eye out, and admonished of the great importance of the strictest vigilance. The warning was needless as they comprehended the perils of the situation as well as any one in the gallant little company.

Never had a darker night settled on the Atlantic. Joe's sharp eyes, as he peered from the bows, could not pierce the gloom a yard ahead. He could only distinguish the fleecy tops of the seas as the boat glided through them. Each wave hol-

low was a watery dungeon, and each headlong plunge seemed to his active imagination like a dive into a bottomless abyss. The boat now made better headway. Her course lay several points from the wind, which had considerably abated, and the sea had also perceptibly fallen.

"This is a good deal like a loon-chase," the doctor remarked. "When you think he's coming up, he breaks the water a full gunshot astern, or an equal distance in some other quarter."

"If we don't gain on her this time we'll heave to and wait till the fog lifts. We've only lost ground so far. I'm very sorry I didn't take your advice and run for the sound, Dawson," repeated the boat officer.

"I only follers my trainin', sir, as you follers yourn. But I've seen a worse scrape nor this is, sir. We'll come out all right, if you'll only keep that highwayman feller still in the boat."

In the very dim light which shone from an aperture in a canvas cover which had been drawn over the lantern, upon the round face of the compass, the Italian brigand, as Dicky designated him, could be seen making very wild gestures.

"There's a case of insanity for you, doctor," ejaculated the midshipman, half in jest.

No sooner had he said it than the Italian was on his feet, acting as if he were going to plunge overboard.

"Hold him, men," and two sturdy fellows brought

him to the seat with a crash. He was naturally very powerful, and he began to struggle in a way that threatened to capsize the boat.

"Is there a line in this boat?" sung out the midshipman.

"Three on 'em, sir," said Dicky, as he fished one out from the sternsheets and flung it forward.

"Tie him up, quick!" exclaimed the doctor as he crept forward to render assistance.

In a shorter time than it could be described, they had the Italian securely bound, so that he could do no injury to himself, nor turn the boat over, thus averting the greatest danger to which they had thus far been exposed. The Italian captain told the midshipman that the man's mind had been unsettled for some time, and he presumed the privations of the last few days had dethroned his reason altogether.

No sooner was everything quiet again, and the boat slowly feeling her way along, than something else occurred showing how dangers, like birds, are fond of flocking together; and how the supremest vigilance is at all times essential in a life at sea. Not more than a dozen strokes had been made when Joe's quick ear caught the faintest sound dead ahead. It could scarcely be distinguished from the swash of the waves.

"There's a steamer, sir, dead ahead. I can just hear her propeller."

"Oars," was the quick order.

In about a minute the churning of a great propeller was plainly heard, exactly in a line with the boat.

"Port your helm, Dawson. Give way strong, men," fairly exploded in orders from the midshipman and the boat shot away from her course.

The order came not an instant too soon. Presently a red light appeared on the cutter's bow, and an immense steamer, as they could tell by the lights shining through the ports, rushed past at a distance of not more than a dozen yards.

"Shall we give 'em a cheer, sir? Perhaps they feel lonesome like out here all alone by themselves," asked Dicky, bent on making the very best of things.

The boat officer smiled at Dicky's attempt at wit, and a loud cheer rang out into the wildness of the night. Whether it was heard by those in whose honor it was given will never be known. If it were distinguished by any acute ear, it was doubtless attributed, by those to whom it may have been disclosed, to the vagrant fancy of the listener, which could make anything out of the break of billows, or the many voices of the wind on a black ocean night.

"We've lost the firing altogether," said the boat officer. "Wonder if the steamer has heard it?"

"A'most likely, sir; but she'll think it's night quarters. Our captain's a sharp on night exercises.

It's a wonder he hasn't had 'em afore this. The wind's haulin' into the west, sir," concluded Dicky, taking a look at the compass.

Sure enough the wind had hauled, and to the northwest too. Presently it came booming down with that peculiar sound so well-known on board ship when she is caught with sails half in and most likely laid over nearly on her beam ends. In five minutes the sea was a mass of yeast. Here was a new peril, or rather an old one repeated from a different quarter, and with a more threatening aspect. A genuine nor'wester is by no means a sailor's delight, as Dicky Dawson had very frequently verified.

"It's my mind, sir, we'd better rig a sea anchor, to ride out this gale to. There'll be a heavy sea runnin' when the ole one gits knocked down."

Acting on the coxswain's suggestion, the midshipman took the tiller and Dicky proceeded to hastily prepare his sea anchor. With the help of the crew, he lashed two small spars together firmly at one end, and spread the other ends apart so as to form a triangular raft, making the base by means of a spare tiller, which he securely fastened with pieces of ropeyarn found in the cuddy. Tilting it on its side, he partially covered it with the mainsail, which he secured by the reef-points and additional stops of ropeyarn. When this was done, and the boat's painter attached, it was cast overboard.

The cutter felt the relief at once. The raft

shielded her from the full force of the sea, and kept her head on. But the wind had only begun to blow. What they had passed through in the afternoon and the early part of the night, 'seemed tame to their experiences now. It was a surprise how the little cutter lived. For a time the roar of the wind was so great that the midshipman's orders could scarcely be heard, and the air was full of driving spray. They eased the painter by pulling toward the raft with all their might ; and, in spite of this, it seemed at times that the rope would part. Had it done so, they must have instantly broached to, and been left helplessly clinging to their boat bottom up, or been as quickly buried beneath a thousand tons of water.

Joe kept his post as lookout, though of what use was a lookout now! He could not help thinking of that night when his sisters seemed to have a vision of what he was then passing through. For the first time, he actually repented having left his home ; and, in his heart he said "good-by" to his mother and sisters, and we must not forget it, to Katie Aston too. There was not a man in the boat, not excluding Dicky Dawson, who did not feel for above an hour that the boat was doomed.

But there came a lull. The wind fell almost as quickly as it rose. Never was a lull in a tempest more joyfully hailed. Sea and sky had been cleared. The stars were all out, and it now being toward morning, the moon had risen. The waves were

beautiful as they tossed up their still huge forms polished with phosphorescent light. A grand sight was seen in the sky. A vast aërolite suddenly flashed out, and mingling its radiance for a moment with the splendor of the night, exploded with a tremendous crash within a half-mile of the boat.

The midshipman swept the horizon with his glass, but no ship was in sight. He burnt his blue lights, and sent up the rockets ; but no answering signal could be discerned.

"They'll cruise for us to-morrer ; we needn't be afeared," said Dicky, as he attacked the first piece of hardtack he had touched since leaving the frigate.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOE RESCUES DICKY DAWSON.

A SALUTE of heavy guns from the river, with a prompt answer from Belem Castle, indicated that a large man-of-war was standing up the Tagus. Shortly after she dropped anchor before the city of marble palaces. What a vision of beauty spread out from the shores of the noble river! Its emerald banks, crowned with ancient windmills and quaint castles, have been for centuries the delight of poets and travellers, and after a passage across the stormy Atlantic, they fall upon the eye with an indescribable charm. And the great city of marble, resting like Rome upon seven hills, is also a vision of exquisite beauty from the sea.

But where are our hero and his brave comrades! We look for them in vain around the great decks. A paragraph in the ship's log discloses all that is known of their fate. After giving the circumstances of sighting the bark and sending the boat, it reads:

"As the boat left the bark, having on board the vessel's crew, a dense fog shut us in. We blew the fog whistle incessantly, and kept up an occasional

firing. Probably from the deflection of the sound, or the bad state of the compass, the boat got off her course. At midnight the wind increased to a gale from north-northwest, and the fog lifted. Rockets were sent up every fifteen minutes, and the firing continued. For two days we cruised under steam for the missing boat. Without doubt, being overloaded, she was swamped in the gale that came on to blow at midnight."

The messmates of the midshipman in charge asked the captain if they might cable the loss of the boat to his friends.

"No, gentlemen ; not for a fortnight yet. She may turn up all right," said the captain.

"That Dicky Dawson's Old Neptune himself. He's been in more shipwrecks than any other sailor in the Navy. You can't drown him," the men remarked, with full faith in Dicky's wizard-like power over the sea.

The day following a little Portuguese fruiter crept up the river unobserved, and toward evening dropped anchor two miles below the frigate. Shortly after a large boat well-manned shoved off, and pulled with steady stroke for the American ship. The stars and stripes fluttered at her stern.

"There's a strange boat under American colors, sir, coming up the river," the quartermaster reported to the officer of the deck.

The officer of the deck seized the glass, and at once recognized the uniforms of two United States

naval officers in the stern sheets. The truth flashed upon him, and he at once reported to the captain that the lost boat was coming rapidly up the river.

Never were louder cheers given a returning boat's crew than greeted the cutter as she drew alongside. It was better than being winners of the most famous race.

The story was briefly told. The rockets which had failed to attract the ship, drew the attention of the fruiter, which had been driven off her course, and in a short time the party was surprised to see her white hull bearing down upon them like an apparition in the silvery light. Bringing the boat to leeward it was not long before the sea became calm enough for them to be taken on board. The captain having a cargo of perishable fruit could make no further delay. The midshipman endeavored to persuade him to lay to until morning, when the ship would probably be sighted, but he decided to make all sail for Lisbon. Had they not experienced head winds, she would have beaten the frigate into port. A boat was immediately sent after the Italian captain and his crew, and the next day they were delivered up to the consul of their country, the insane man going to the hospital.

For a week nothing was talked about, among the boys, but the adventures of the boat. Joe and Doughty repeated the story to them until they themselves were heartily tired of it. Joe also spent hours in writing about it to his mother and sisters. He

furthermore wrote a very long letter to Katie Aston, working harder over its composition than he would have done at heaving in the heaviest anchor. When this letter was finished, he hesitated a long time about sending it ; but at last, one day as the mail orderly was going over the side, he thrust it into the bag, and then it was too late to recall what he had done.

Three weeks of the roughest kind of sea life, intermingled with adventures, as we have seen, of the most thrilling character, gave our hero a relish for the novelties of a great port like Lisbon. He and Doughty were granted frequent liberty, as they always succeeded in maintaining their classification as "good conduct boys." The great aqueduct, the various monuments, the king's palace, the beautiful chapel of Saint John the Baptist, in the church of Saint Roch, had all been visited, and the boys were waiting impatiently for one of Lisbon's most characteristic sights.

A man had come on board ship with the flaming advertisement of a bull fight, which he endeavored to explain in very broken, laughable English. It was to take place the following Friday. The wildest bulls had been brought from Andalusia, a large number of horses were to be present from the royal stables, and the queen herself would preside and distribute the favors. In short, it was to be the grandest bull fight seen in Portugal in many years.

Joe and Doughty decided at once to see this fight, if it were possible to get liberty on that day. They made inquiry of Dicky Dawson, with whom they had become great favorites, about the bull-fights of Portugal, and were somewhat disappointed with Dicky's representation.

"They're hardly worth goin' to," said he. "The bulls ain't allowed to kill the hosses as they be in Spain. They pads their horns or puts brasses on 'em, and when the bull gits tired the beggars all rush on him with a kind of Injin whoop, push him over and yank him outen the ring. There's no excitement to it, an' I seldom ever goes to 'em."

When the day arrived Joe, Doughty, Little Sol, Butts and about twenty other boys were permitted to go on shore in charge of the schoolmaster. Long before the hour of the bull fight they walked impatiently about the city, and got to the ring so early that they thought they would have no trouble in getting seats.

It was a great day in Lisbon. Thousands bedecked in gay colors thronged the streets and highways. Carriages, bearing the coat-of-arms of noble families, rolled along, drawn by horses in richly ornamented harness, followed by postilions in livery of many hues. Had the boys not known that all this display was over a bull fight, they would have thought that it was coronation day, or that a foreign king was coming to visit the country, and the people were going out to welcome him.

At the ring they had to wait long, with a densely packed, impatient crowd, for admission. Finally the gates were thrown open, and there was a grand rush for seats. Joe and Doughty, with Butts crowding in after, got a good position. Whoever knew American boys abroad to fail in getting good seats in any public place, if left to their own activity and ingenuity?

The place where they sat commanded a full view of every part of the pavilion. "All Lisbon must be here," remarked Doughty. Everybody seemed to be there, from the barefooted Gallegos, or water carriers, to the royal family. Everybody seemed waiting in suspense for the queen to enter the royal box. Presently she appeared, and was greeted by the vast audience with prolonged applause. As she waved her handkerchief there was a grand burst of music, and an officer of the king's household galloped into the ring, followed by a troop of riders mounted on horses in rich housings, and dressed in the most brilliant and fantastic costumes. After a graceful salute to the court, and the public, they dashed with a great flourish of lances to their several stations. A large number of *campinos*, or bull-fighters, similarly dressed, but unmounted, followed them into the ring, each bearing a gaudy banner or mantle.

The public imagination was highly wrought up by this display. The boys now saw a man step forward and quickly pull open a little door. Standing

one side, he shook a red flag violently in the aperture, and instantly a noble bull bounded into the ring. For a moment he stood regarding the vast audience with astonishment and anger. He was indeed a beautiful animal, and as he stood, lithe and graceful as a deer, pawing the ground and lashing his sides furiously with his tail, the boys burst into an enthusiastic shout. The bull's *début* had been so handsomely made that the audience cheered him lustily.

Already the *campinos* had begun their feats of agility and daring. The air was aglow with their waving mantles and flags. They were endeavoring, not only to exhibit their own bravery, but also to excite the bull to an attack upon the mounted men, who as yet remained inactive. So violently did the bull charge upon them that in a few minutes every one of them had vaulted over the palings, leaving the bull master of the ring.

Joe was getting excited. His sympathy up to the present moment was with the bull. He wished that he were bestride one of those magnificent horses, or that he was even on foot in the ring; he would show the audience some sport.

Led by an officer of the royal guard, the knight-errant of the occasion, each rider now put spurs to his horse, and they were all exercising in a series of quick evolutions, preparatory to a direct attack upon the bull. So admirably trained were horses and riders that even the bull looked as if he were

charmed by the exhibition. The riders now began severally to confront the bull, and to provoke his anger by the sharp thrusts of their lances into his shoulders and neck. Thus wounded and insulted he sprang at his tormentors with such force that they were barely able to evade his strokes by the utmost dexterity and promptness. One noble horse was struck with such violence that, in rearing, he lost his balance and fell heavily to the ground. Both the horse and his rider lay stunned for a moment, when they were assisted out of the ring. Meanwhile another fine animal being struck, the king gave orders for the horsemen to withdraw, as the royal horses were too valuable to be injured in this manner.

The programme with the first bull was nearly completed ; the band struck up a lively air, and several men rushed in to compete in single combats for the honors of the day. One of them wrapped himself in a crimson mantle and sat with extreme indifference in a chair ; he barely saved himself from a toss as the bull threw the chair a dozen feet into the air. Another man stood on his hands, shaking a bright cloth in his teeth. He escaped by turning a very expeditious, but graceful handspring. The applause over this was immense.

The most perilous feat of the ring was now attempted. An athletic and sprightly young man covered with silver lace, and hung all over with little bells, undertook to throw himself between the

bull's horns and cling to them until the bull should become exhausted, when the *campinos* would rush in and drag him in triumph from the ring. Courageously making the attempt, he unhappily missed his aim and fell directly in front of the infuriated animal.

At this moment of terrible suspense, moreover, Joe suddenly discovered what had not been seen by anybody else — that the bull had lost the padding from one of his horns. He stood over the young man, his eyes glaring and his whole attitude one of furious anger. He refused to be diverted by the colors glancing all around him, apparently considering whether he should trample on his victim or pierce him with his naked horn. The young man did not dare to move, for he was aware that the bull possessed every advantage. The excitement of the audience was at its highest pitch.

Dicky Dawson sat in the audience not more than half-conscious of what had been going on in the ring. Poor Dicky had been yielding to his one bad habit, and, we regret to record it, was about half-intoxicated. This last act in the ring had worked its way into his bewildered brain as a collision between two vessels, and he seemed to feel that he was needed at the scene of disaster. Acting upon this impulse, he jumped into the ring, and having very good command of himself, marched straight forward and seized the bull by the horn. Only an instant, and Dicky had exchanged places

with the young man, and the bull was glaring over him.

Joe's admiration of Dicky's sailor-like qualities was unbounded, and since the perils through which they had passed together, a very warm friendship had sprung up between them. He could not endure to see Dawson in a situation of such great danger, and with the sprightliness of a sailor lad he leaped the paling to be his rescuer if possible. Everybody was astonished at his temerity. An Englishman present cried out for him to come back and not risk his life for a drunken sailor. Several American travellers shouted their remonstrances, but Joe felt that he had entered the ring on a good errand, and he would not be frightened back. On the farm at home he had conquered many a steer, quite as wild and powerful as this maddened bull.

Conscious that thousands of eyes were watching him with eager interest, without the slightest hesitation he advanced coolly toward the bull, and placed himself so that with one hand he could grasp his horn, while with the other he could seize his shaggy mane. Laying hold of the bull he told Dawson to get up and leave the ring instantly, which Dicky, realizing now that he had mistaken the kind of craft he had been dealing with, proceeded to do, but with no great celerity.

Never before had Joe's mode of attack been seen in Portugal, and it appeared the height of folly. A

murmur of remonstrance ran through the audience; and there were many cries for the *campinos* to rush in and rescue the reckless sailor boy. Strangely the bull and Joe for a moment were the only quiet ones in the pavilion. Presently a strange silence settled upon the vast audience. It was a thrilling scene—the brave sailor boy apparently at the mercy of the furious animal, and thousands of spectators looking on with breathless interest.

Suddenly the bull recovered himself, and with an angry flaunt of his head renewed hostilities. Joe quickly found it more difficult to cling to a bull's slippery horn than to the yardarm of a man-of-war in a tempest, but he was determined to be captain of this lively craft.

As a good seaman favors a ship in a hurricane, so Joe resolved to humor the bull; he realized that he must take care of his strength, for he would need it all before he finished with his antagonist. The bull writhed and hooked and stamped. One instant the audience expected to see Joe dangling from the bull's horns, or the next trampled beneath his feet; but he clung as he would cling to a lifeline in a fearful surf. During the intervals of the bull's violence, as in a breaker on its ebb, he gallantly struck upon his feet.

Each time he did so "Bravo! bravo!" rent the air. Continuing to put forth still greater power, the bull plunged and tore around the ring. Alternately Joe was jerked and swung from his feet and fairly

spun through the air. Round and round flew the bull as in a race for life ; the pavilion tossed and reeled and whirled before Joe's giddy sight. In this manner the bull completed several circuits of the ring, the dust rising and hanging over it like wreaths of smoke.

How Joe held on ! He feared that he could not endure the strain a minute longer, but he dreaded to let go. He lamented his rashness in seizing the bull by the horn, when all at once the animal's speed began to slacken. Joe experienced a thrill of gratitude as his feet once more touched the ground. He was tired of flying, and was very glad to run.

Finding that he could not free his horn from Joe's grip, the bull at last came to a halt, and began to paw the ground in disappointed anger. This was just the advantage Joe was seeking, and which a bull seldom gives till towards the close of a fight. No sooner had the bull began to throw his foot into the air, with its little cloud of dust, than Joe jumped in front of him and grasped both his horns.

"Bravo ! bravo !" again rent the air, and there was another call for the *campinos*. Not waiting this time to see what Joe would do, they rushed upon the bull and by their united strength threw him from his feet. Binding him securely with cords they alternately rolled and dragged him from the ring.

Joe had intended to cast the bull himself, or at

least to make the attempt, by twisting his head so suddenly to one side that the bull would fall. Fortunately he had been saved the experiment, and as well as rescuing Dawson, had been rescued himself.

He was much abashed by the applause of the audience as he made his way awkwardly back to his seat. That evening he told Doughty that if he had not gone into the ring for so good a purpose, he should be heartily ashamed of the whole affair.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CLEARED FOR ACTION.

A LIFE at sea is at all times full of surprises. The transition from a bull fight to a great war need not therefore disturb the natural sequence. We next find our friend Joe in a great Eastern port, almost within hearing of the sound of terrible battles, and longing with ignorant enthusiasm to see, and even to participate in, the fighting.

Suddenly the great bay of Smyrna had been covered with a forest of spars, the growth almost of a single day. The war raging between Russia and Turkey had caused this massing of squadrons. Hidden away among the great iron-clads was the little United States fleet, inferior to all as respects vessels and armament, superior to all in highly trained officers and able-bodied, intelligent seamen.

The passage up the Mediterranean had been a glorious one to Joe. The weather had been crisp and beautiful, and the navigating officer, who had become quite friendly to him, and whom he often assisted, pointed out many of the most famous sights, and told him something of their history.

Besides, as lookout, he had been the first to report Stromboli. The navigator had told him to be on the watch for it, and he easily distinguished its far-off glow from the stars that burned on the horizon all around it. From the masthead he also caught the first faint outline of Mount Etna; and how proud he felt, on the same duty, to be the first to pick up the royal masts of the English fleet lying in *Vourla* bay waiting in hourly expectation of steaming up the Dardanelles for the defense of Constantinople against the Russian army.

What an event it was in the life of a boy to see so many of the great navies of the world! No other such formidable gathering had been witnessed during the century. Every day something took place either of a very exciting or interesting nature. Functions and drills were incessant. The ports of each newly arriving ship fairly blazed with the great number of salutes, which, from international courtesy, were obliged to be fired; and the harbor resounded every day with cannonading from colors, at eight bells, to sunset at four.

Joe and Doughty applied themselves to the greater variety of duties belonging to a man-of-war in active service. They were made signal boys, and, for a time, stood watch and watch with the signal quartermaster on the poop. Joe's arms fairly ached from signalling messages which the presence of so many American ships daily necessitated. However, it kept him wide awake, and gave him a

fine insight into points of naval etiquette and the meaning of different evolutions.

Occasionally on boat duty the boys would go alongside the foreign ships, and get a good look at their heavily plated sides, their vast decks with their huge guns, and think how little it would take to set all their ports ablaze with the thunder and lightning of war. Doughty was a good historian for a boy, and he told Joe a great deal about the different countries represented by those great navies. What a grand sight it would be, they often remarked to each other, to see those ships in actual battle! And how glorious it would be to participate in an actual sea fight! There is nothing easier in the world than fighting battles on the quiet decks of armed ships; or while gazing over the thwarts of a cutter into the depths of a placid sea.

"I haven't got the hang of all these functions and ceremonies," said Joe to Dicky Dawson, one morning, after a spirited drill at small arms. "I don't see how the officers keep the run of them all."

Dicky was seated in the forecabin, trimming his boat cushions in a highly ornamental manner.

"You'll soon learn 'em. They're as simple as lickin' a boy when you once understands 'em. As for the officers, they has books to keep themselves posted."

"Do you know what the time's going to be this afternoon? Their getting man-ropes out on all the

yards, and I helped the quartermaster to fish out the German flag."

"The German Prince as come in last week's goin' round callin' on the flagships. They mans yards for him jest as they does for a king."

"Would they do the same by one of our Presidents?"

"Jest the same ; but I fancies they don't like to. These here kings is jealous of ev'ry form of government 'cept their own, but we've got so big that they're obliged to respect us. I seen what come near bein' a big row over a mistake about mannin' yards for Gen'ral Grant."

"Tell me about it," pressed Joe eagerly.

"When he come to Athens he made official visits as you'll see the Prussian prince do. All the ships manned yards but the Prussians, an' that night ashore in a Greek café at the *Piræus*, us sailors took it up with their men. One of our fellers spoke German, and wanted to know if a President of these United States warn't as good as any Dutchman they could trot out for a king. They up and sassed us, an' just as we was gittin' ready to sail into 'em, somebody says, 'The yards warn't manned for a very good reason. The ship didn't have no yards to man.' We looked out the winder at her in the harbor an' sure enough she didn't have a stick in her that warn't straight up and down."

"What did you do then?"

"Of course as gentlemen we 'pologized, and begged their pardons."

"Have you ever been in Smyrna before?"

"Many's a time. I've rode over that big hill there, Mount Pagus, they calls it, a dozen times on a donkey. I'm goin' ag'in soon. But they says as it's dangerous now this war's started up the bandits."

"May I go with you?" asked Joe. He had not been ashore on liberty yet, and his curiosity was much excited by the bumboatmen, and the donkeys he could see trotting along the quay, appearing in the distance not much larger than mice.

"Yes; I'll take ye along to keep ye out 'o mischief."

"You'll be going to another bull fight when you get a chance, won't you, Dawson?" spoke up a clumsy-looking marine, in a badgering tone.

"You tend to yer own business, an' I'll look arter mine. I never knew no marine as had pluck enough to go into a calf-pen."

Dicky's retort raised a shout of laughter among the listeners which caused the marine to drop him much more quickly than he had picked him up. Dicky was in truth very sore over the spectacle he had made of himself in the bull ring, and the slightest reference to it made him very angry. He had, however, not forgotten to privately thank Joe for coming to his rescue, and Joe was secretly his particular favorite.

Here Doughty and Hanson came along, considerably excited over a galley yarn. They asked Dawson if he had heard the rumor that the ship was going to sail to exercise the crew at sea.

"Them kind o' rumors allers grows in heavy crops aboard ship. I'd like to go. I'm gittin' tired of all this fussin' and foolin'. The *ar-chip-i-lago's* a beautiful place," answered Dawson.

The boys were very much amused at Dicky's pronunciation of archipelago, but they did not let him see it.

"You'll learn a good deal o' history among them islands. The ancient Pershuns used to inhabit 'em."

"Greeks, you mean," said Doughty.

"No, I don't, mean Greeks. I don't stand no correctin' from no boy, in no history," returned Dicky with emphasis.

Joe winked at Doughty to say no more. They accepted Dicky's authority in seamanship, and on a variety of nautical subjects, and were willing to let him think there were but few things which he did not know all about.

A month of constant drills and exercises wore away a little of the gilt from this splendid life, showing the stern stuff underneath of which it was in reality made. The daily sight of the vast fleet had become an almost commonplace view, as no doubt the attractions of a king's palace do to those who see but little else.

For some reason the ship did not put to sea until a month later than it was rumored she would go. One fine afternoon she got under way to spend a week at sea in exercising the crew. As she steamed out of port her departure was honored by all the bands in the fleet playing the "Star-Spangled Banner." It was such a beautiful afternoon that everybody was on deck watching the glow upon the hills and the varying tints in the sky and upon the sea. Evening came on remarkable for its loveliness. The ship seemed alternately ploughing through plains of silver and gold. The walls of the Turkish fort at the mouth of the harbor looked like burnished metal.

Presently the sun dipped behind the western hills, the sunset guns all around rumbled a parting salute, and the twilight came on in all that mystery of loveliness which poets and painters are always seeking but are never able to unfold.

As the ship neared the fort the last rays of the sun were gilding it, and strange movements were observed from the deck all along the ramparts. As the ship came still nearer a soldier ran along the outer wall with a lighted torch, and climbing to the top of a turret, proceeded to wave it with all his might. This was certainly a signal for heaving to; but for what purpose nobody could conjecture. It was thought for a moment that they might be about to try their battery upon torpedoes with which the channel was thickly planted, but this was

quite improbable, as there were small boats and schooners all around.

Joe and Doughty stood near the starboard gangway, holding in full view the admiral and captain who stood upon the bridge. The boys could see by their puzzled air that they did not take in the meaning of the signal. Presently, however, they saw a frown overshadow their faces as they beheld the flash of a gun fired across the frigate's bows. There was no further doubt, the ship had been peremptorily ordered to heave to. This was an exigency as wholly unexpected as an attack from a fleet composed of a thousand ancient galleys. It was also very high-handed. For an armed ship of a nation at peace to be summarily arrested like this could be regarded as scarcely less than an insult. Some of the officers went so far as to think that complications had suddenly arisen between Turkey and the United States, and that despatches warning the ships from Turkish waters had been intercepted.

The boys watched the admiral with intense interest. No sooner was the gun fired, than in a clear, ringing tone he commanded, "Beat to quarters, sir!"

The captain gave the order to his executive, and in an instant the drummer was rolling off the call. Many times had Joe seen the ship cleared for action, but nothing like this had he ever before witnessed. Suddenly the magazines flew open, the decks be-

came alive with men, railings fell away and ports sprang open as by magic, and in a shorter time than it could be told, fifteen great guns turned their muzzles in deadly aim upon the fort. As many gun captains stood with lockstrings in hand, waiting the fatal word, "Fire!"

The officers of the fort could see everything that was being done on board the ship, and could not mistake its meaning. They knew that any further demonstration would bring a broadside of eleven-inch shell tearing through them, and they were by no means certain, as it was afterwards ascertained, that they would not be shelled as it was. The fort could not stand against the ship. It had been built a century, and was out of repair; the guns were old-fashioned, and could not throw one shot in twenty into the ship. Should there be a fight, their only hope would be to successfully explode a torpedo under the frigate; and it was quite generally known that the Greeks, who were the secret allies of Russia, had raised most of the torpedoes on dark nights and disconnected them from the battery ashore by cutting the wires. The fort, therefore, from this or other causes, forebore any further act of hostility; or if there was an attempt to explode torpedoes, it was a dead failure.

There was not a member of the crew who was not anxious to hear the order to fire on the fort. They all knew the man who held the fort in the shadow of his guns. He carried the scars of battle,

and we may say—for this is all true—that he was the famous admiral who, while a lieutenant, sent the *Merrimac* back to Norfolk with his cheesebox monitor. All were aware that he would resent an insult to the flag, though the next minute a dozen torpedoes were exploded under him.

It was a thrilling picture, the great ship all ready for action waiting for the fort to open fire upon her; everybody as silent as death, and as fixed in his station as though ship and crew had suddenly turned into stone. In this manner the frigate defied the fort, not slackening her speed in the least, and holding the enemy, as the garrison was now regarded, under cover of her guns.

At this point there was another sensation. Fires began to appear along the shores. The first was a large bonfire near the fort, kindled immediately after the firing of the gun. It was not long before there were great fires burning everywhere, even upon the hillsides miles away. The admiral swept the whole country with his glass, and Joe, who was doing messenger duty, heard him say to the captain that he had some little idea of the cause of seeking the detention of the ship, but he was completely nonplused by the springing up of so many fires. However, nothing more occurring, the ship soon put many miles between herself and the fort.

Arriving in a broad, open space about midnight, the fires were banked, and there was a grand exercise at general quarters. Three rounds were fired,

and the excited crew could not have done more credit to themselves had they been in training for years instead of but a few months. They only regretted that so much powder was wasted upon an imaginary foe, when but a few hours before they had an actual fort which they were within an ace of bombarding. Firequarters and boatdrill kept them active till daylight, when the admiral, indignant at the treatment of the fort authorities, gave orders to put back into port.

He ordered a charge to be put in each gun, and several spare charges to be kept by the battery. He seemed to have fully made up his mind that if anything of the kind occurred again that he would shell the fort.

As they were nearing the entrance to the harbor, a very suspicious-looking craft was sighted, apparently lying in wait. It was shortly ascertained that she flew Turkish colors. The hostile attitude of the fort, the fires springing up all over the country simultaneously with its action, and now the presence of a Turkish iron-clad, combined to give matters a very serious look.

The officers of the guns' crews were quietly instructed to have everything ready for going to quarters, four bells were sounded, and she was put under full pressure of steam. Everybody was in suspense, waiting to spring at the first tap of the drum to his gun. The Turkish ship was watched for the slightest hostile demonstration.

Had there been a sufficient cause for detaining the ship, her defiance of Turkish authority might justify an attack upon her. The outlook was very suspicious, the iron-clad on one side and the fort on the other.

Joe saw a few white faces around him, and in truth things looked very differently from what they did the night before, when they had been taken by surprise.

The vessel was reached. There was scarcely any sign of life upon her deck. She even dipped her colors to the American frigate. The fort was reached. A man was seen at the flagstaff who also dipped. This was a singular turn of affairs, but a few breathed more easily. Joe fancied the admiral looked a little disappointed, but he could not quite tell.

The ship sped on. When she let go her anchor, a boat was in waiting containing the highest Turkish official of the city. With much obsequiousness he apologized for a great mistake made by the commanding officer of the fort. The order had been to allow no incoming vessel to pass the fort after sunset; but by some peculiar wording it was interpreted to mean that no vessel should be allowed to pass either way. The commandant had the presence of mind to look at the order after the gun was fired, and found out his error. Otherwise it would have been his duty to have fired into the ship.

The fires which had been seen springing up simultaneously all over the country were in honor of a Turkish religious festival, and the Turkish man-of-war was lying in wait for a rakish-looking craft which had been cruising among the islands, and was suspected of being a Russian gunboat about to make a swoop down upon Smyrna.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SAILOR BOY CLASSICS.

RECOLLECT that you are under Dawson's orders to-day."

This was the last injunction of the officer of the deck to Joe, Doughty, Hanson, Butts and Little Sol who were drawn up at the port gangway for inspection previous to their departure for a day's sightseeing in Smyrna.

"Ay, ay, sir," the boys replied, as they started over the side for the boat waiting below.

It being the custom to send apprentice boys on liberty from the cruising ships of the Navy in charge of a petty officer, the unsettled state of Turkey in this instance made the custom doubly imperative. The boys had begged that Dicky Dawson might have charge of them, and he had been detailed for this duty, though with not much grace on his part.

"Tumble in there, my hearties," said Dawson as they reached the boat; "we want to get there afore night."

They jumped into the stern sheets, the boat shoved off and was rapidly pulled to the landing.

As they mounted the stone steps to the quay, Dawson observed: "I'm capen of this expedition to-day, an' I want ye all to understand it. I've been obliged to give my time to you boys, an' I'm goin' to be boss."

"I guess we'se big enough to look out for ourselves," said Butts.

"If you don't want ter come under the regulations ye can go back in the boat; I won't have no boy as won't mind."

"Fall in and behave yourself, Butts," said Joe.

After mumbling that there was too much "bossin' aboard ship to come ashore and be bossed," he yielded, and the party started for a donkey stable in the environs of the city. They thought it would be an easy matter to employ half a dozen donkeys, but the proprietor had raised the hire to an exorbitant sum, and they dickered and bickered, through an interpreter, till in a fit of disgust they filed out of the stable.

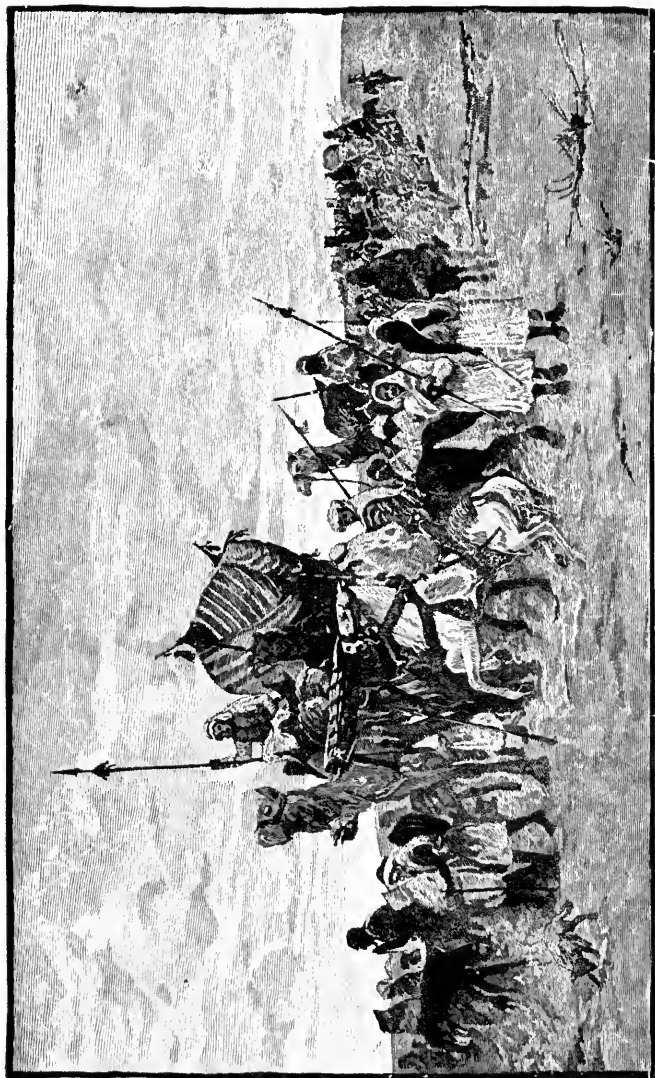
"That's the way they does; they allers thinks they can cheat Americans, but they didn't do it this time," said Dicky, as they started for another establishment.

A loud call from the stable, signifying that Dicky's price would be accepted, sent them back, and in almost no time six donkeys stood saddled and bridled. There was quite a little scuffle to see who should get the best-looking one, and the party mounted and set out.

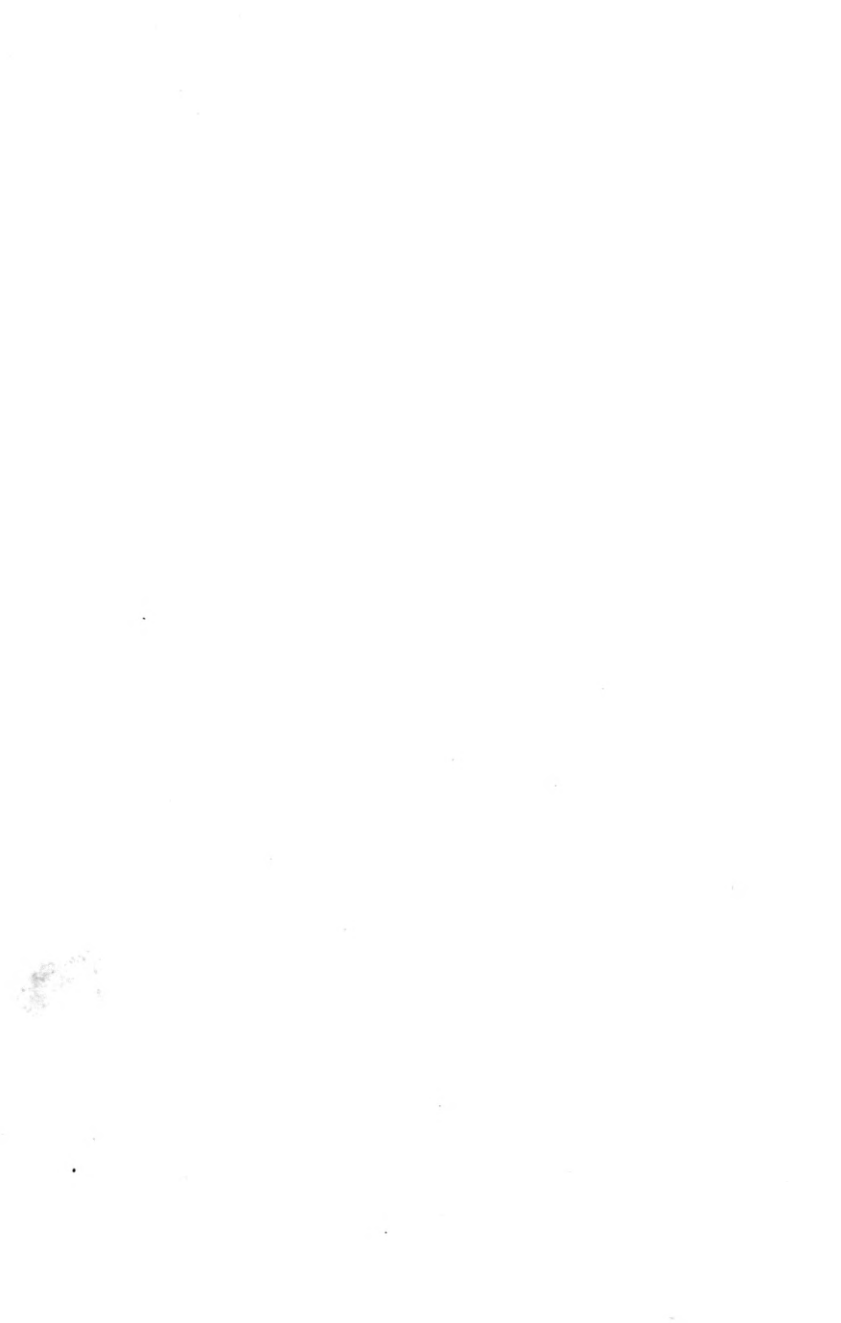
Dawson's plan was to ride through the city, visiting the docks, the bazars, the Pacha's palace, the four great quarters of the city, each occupied by a different race or nationality, and then to ride several miles outside where they would get dinner at a little Turkish restaurant, on the banks of the classical river Meles. The classical part, however, had not occurred to Dicky. This programme would prolong the ride, and, like all sailors, he had a weakness for long excursions bestride a horse or donkey, he did not care which.

"What a queer old city this is," Doughty remarked to Joe. "It's the same Smyrna we read about in the book of Revelation. I suppose these old ruins were fine buildings in the time of the Bible. They say there are the ruins of two very beautiful temples somewhere round here. One was built in honor of Homer, and the other was erected to Æsculapius. The teacher in the Boston Latin School used to tell us that Smyrna was one of the seven cities which claimed to be the birth-place of Homer. They've got a cave out here, too, that they call Homer's Cave."

A long line of camels suddenly interrupted this classical conversation. It was a Persian train just starting on its long journey heavily laden with merchandize. In some unaccountable way the whole party found themselves mixed up in this caravan, and several of the camels were disposed to resent the intrusion. One huge one made a bite at Han-



THE TRAIN ON ITS LONG JOURNEY.



son's head, and he barely escaped by throwing himself forward on his donkey. As it was, the camel got his cap and began grinding it up when his driver by a solid blow made him drop it.

"Whip up yer donkeys, an' git out o' this. These camels is gittin' mad," cried the leader.

The whips were applied, but they had no more effect than the lighting of flies would have upon the tough hides of the donkeys.

"I've found a way to git 'em along," cried Butts. "Put the end of a stick under the saddle, and lift up. It's new to 'em."

Butts's discovery was employed, and it had the effect to send the donkeys scampering from among the camels, to the great relief of their riders.

"What d'ye s'pose all that howlin's for," said Dawson abruptly, stopping to listen. "If we was in any other country, I should think we was near a lunatik asylum. They don't have no sich insti-tooshuns here. The Turks is barbarious."

They had come to a court from which strange sounds proceeded. A good many people stood at the farther end of the enclosure, listening intently and stretching their necks to get a sight through a large window of the originating cause of these really startling noises. They turned the donkeys into the court, and leaving Little Sol in charge of them, the rest of the party jammed themselves in among the spectators. Joe was taking his first look through the window when he felt the small

end of a cane jabbed into him so violently that it would not have hurt him much worse had it made actual incisions. He turned indignantly and saw that a very stout woman was taking this method to make him understand that he was obstructing her view. He worked his way one side, and Butts crowded into his place. Butts got the end of the cane driven with still greater force into him. He sung out "Don't!" with such a prolongation and swelling of the vowel that everybody looked at him in surprise, and the boys all laughed.

They found that the noise came from a company of howling and dancing dervishes, who were performing their peculiar rites. They were howling and whirling in a remarkable manner. After sitting crosslegged on the floor, howling out their devotions at the very top of their voices, meanwhile swinging their bodies violently back and forth, they would spring to their feet and spin around until they would fall swooning into the arms of attendants. To add to the ludicrousness of the scene, a number of pretty little children had toddled into the sacred space and were imitating the motions and sounds made by the dervishes in the practice of their strange rites.

"Come along," said Dawson. "I don't want to hear no more sich nonsense. When I want to see monkey shines, I'll go somewhere else."

The donkey brigade struck a lively canter which soon brought them to a railroad crossing. Butts

had been using his new method for the production of speed with such persistency that he led the cavaliers. Had he been more familiar with donkey character he would have been more temperate in the application of his invention. However, he reached the crossing first, and gave his donkey an extra lift under the saddle, when the animal as if the whole thing had been cunningly planned, planted his feet in front of the first rail and sent his rider sprawling across the track. At that instant a train came thundering round a curve. Hanson and Doughty were nearest the track, and realizing Butts's peril jumped for the prostrate knight, and jerked him from the rails just as the train swept by. Butts had not seen the train or he could have saved himself. The donkey stood with the cars almost rubbing his nose, and looked as if he were waiting to view Butts's remains, which no doubt he would have done with utmost complacency but for the timely interference of Doughty and Hanson.

"There's something worth lookin' at," exclaimed Dawson, as they reached the commercial part of the city. "Them fellers carries on their backs a'most a thousand pounds. Their legs is padded to keep the veins from bursting."

A group of porters were going along, bearing immense loads. The exhibition of strength was really wonderful.

"The consul told me all about them the other day," remarked Doughty. "He said they are one

of the curiosities of Smyrna. The profession descends from father to son, and they are so jealous of any one going into the business that they combine against him, and run him out."

"I should as soon think of bein' jealous of a man carryin' a hod," observed Dicky.

The lading of a transport with the horses of a cavalry regiment called away their attention. By means of a derrick the horses were slung up in broad bands and let down through a wide hatchway to the transport's main deck. Many of them kicked and struggled in the air, but to no purpose. The riders were very odd-looking soldiers. They wore the costume of the interior, which gave each one the appearance of a Bashi-bazouk; in fact they were a regiment of Bashi-bazouks, as the boys ascertained from the remarks of an Englishman standing by.

Thousands of refugees also, with rags tied about their feet for shoes, and dressed in other rags of every color, walking aimlessly about, mingled a very fantastic element in the picture. Before Dawson got them away Joe had put out most of his spare change upon a poor woman who had a family of most beautiful little children whom she was trying to keep from wandering away. Purchasing a lot of oranges and cakes for them, he patted the little heads, thinking that all the children of the world, no matter to what nation belonging, are of the same nation. He heard them giving the same shouts, and saw them engaged in the same games that

had been accustomed to in his far-away Aroostook home.

For some reason Dawson was in a great hurry. They were obliged to hasten through the bazars, were allowed but a few minutes at the barracks and the palace, were permitted but a glimpse of the Greek, Armenian, Turkish and Jewish quarters of the city when Dawson headed them for Mount Pagus, lying just without the town.

"Isn't this a grand sight?" exclaimed Doughty, as they stopped to rest the donkeys almost at the mountain's summit.

The city lay directly beneath them. Whatever might be said of its streets and buildings, from this vantage ground it presented a most beautiful sight. The minarets, the domes of the mosques, the gardens full of orange, lemon and fig-trees, the vineyards, and, fronting all, the fine harbor with the clusters of merchant shipping at the wharves, and the noble fleet lying anchored on its bosom, owing to a singular grouping of the most conspicuous objects, made a picture such as a traveller will not be likely to see more than once in a circuit of the globe. But most of the party did not appreciate the view. They had seen photographs of it on the way up exposed for sale, and they would be much more pleasing than the reality.

"Won't you give us permission to turn in here, Dawson?" asked Doughty as they came to the arch of an ancient amphitheatre.

Dawson assented and they rode in. It had been a splendid structure, horseshoe in form, and contained seats for the accommodation of many thousands. The arches and abutments, together with much of the external walls, remained as smooth as they were two thousand years ago.

"Was the top all open like this?" inquired Joe.

"Yes; no places of amusement anciently had roofs; and some think the temples were uncovered. They were jolly places to get rid of accidents in. People wern't burnt up then in theatres as they are nowadays."

"What did they do here?" pursued Joe.

"They did all sorts of things. They had gladiatorial fights, combats between wild beasts, and sometimes great naval engagements."

"I suppose like the big one we had the other night off the fort," spoke up Hanson.

"No; they had actual battles. They had a deep trench running through the widest part of the arena which was flooded, and galleys rammed each other, and sailors fought with swords. Men were often killed, and galleys sunk."

"Where did you get all your information, Doughty?" asked Hanson.

"Ain't you seen him goin' round the last week or two with a red-covered book, a-readin' on it when he ought to been mendin' his close?" asked Dawson. "This guide-book knowledge's showy, but it's very shaller."

"Knowledge is knowledge wherever you find it," said Doughty warmly. "But my father is a minister and has been all over Asia Minor. I heard him deliver a lecture on the 'Seven Churches of Asia.' One of them was here, you know. That one with the big dome over there must be the church he spoke of. And that must be the tomb of St. Polycarp after whom the church was named," he quickly added as he pointed to a tomb in the distance.

"Never mind Polycarp," said Dawson. "Tell us something about this old castle." They were now approaching an ancient fortification which crowned the whole summit of the hill.

"This old castle was first built by Alexander the Great, and many ages after re-built by the Saracens."

"D'ye mean to say that Alexander the Great laid all them bottom rocks with his own han's? You can't make me believe any such stuff. I've laid too much stonewall myself for that," said Butts.

A general laugh greeted Butts's literal interpretation of Doughty's remarks.

"It's gettin' along in the forenoon an' we mustn't make no more stops," said Dawson.

They whipped up the donkeys and began a rapid descent of the mountain on the other side. Below them for miles stretched the valley with the beautiful river Meles winding through. For the most part the country was unsettled. The few houses there were were very secluded on account of the

high walls surrounding them, and the vines which seemed to cover them completely over. The boys observed that each house had iron bars across all the windows, and that each one was a fortified castle as well as being a residence. Occasionally a proprietor was discovered, looking out rather fiercely on the party, as though he considered them intruders.

A mile away from any habitation they came upon quite a deep gorge. As they issued from the farther end, a loud barking of dogs and a shout from Butts, whose donkey had been experimented on so much that a part of the time he would not go at all, and, in consequence, kept his rider constantly in the rear, caused them to quickly turn about. They beheld three ferocious brutes snarling and snapping and growling at Butts as if they had caught him stealing grapes from their master's vineyard. Butts was whacking his donkey with his heels and laying on with his whip as if he were surrounded by a pack of wolves. He might as well have kicked a tugboat to make her move faster when there was barely steam enough to turn over the propeller.

"Them dogs acts kind o' wild. They must be some o' them brutes from the city as nobody owns; we must go and help Butts," quickly observed Dawson.

They forced the donkeys down pell-mell, and were not an instant too soon. One dog had the

toe of Butts's shoe in his mouth, and another had put his fore feet upon the saddle, and had a mouthful of the loose part of Butts's shirtsleeve. Dawson brought his heavy stick upon the head of this ferocious animal with a tremendous thump, and the dog let go his hold. But he sprang at Dawson furiously, and in an instant had his ankle in his mouth, biting away as if he would chew it off. Fortunately Dawson had on a pair of lace-up shoes with very heavy tops, but he could feel the dog's teeth gradually working their way through. Hanson and Joe turned the butts of their whips upon the dog, but he would not let go.

"Git out o' the way, all on yer. I'll fix him," said Dawson, in a very energetic tone.

He quietly drew from his breast pocket a little silver-mounted revolver, and, coolly taking aim, sent the dog howling and writhing over the grass. Presently the dog lay stretched out dead. The other dogs, which had been getting the worst of it, from the whips and sticks of the boys, when they saw their comrade dead, started off yelping as though their lives depended on every bound they made.

"I allers carries this little jewel in a savage or barbarian country," said Dicky, looking affectionately at his beautiful little weapon. "It was a present from a lady as lost her husband in a shipwreck, for helping to save her and the baby."

The boys looked at the wonderful little revolver

and at the dog now stiff upon the grass, and wished they were each armed with one of the same kind. "Who knows," remarked Hanson, "but we may all need revolvers before we get back to the ship?"

"I don't want no revolvers in the hands of boys. They never knows how to use 'em. If any o' you had fired at that dog you'd shot one o' yerselves, or a donkey, which would 'ave been the same thing," observed Dicky.

"I only hope that dog didn't belong to anybody," said Doughty. "A Turk would never forgive anybody for killing his dog. Look up there now!" he suddenly exclaimed in conclusion.

The party looked up to a jutting point overlooking the hollow, and they beheld a man dressed in the garb of a shepherd looking down at the dog. He was scowling and shaking his hands. Suddenly he ground the end of his staff into the earth, gave the party a menacing gesture, and turned quickly away.

"I don't quite like the looks o' that," said Dawson. "But we can take care o' that feller."

CHAPTER XXV.

A MYSTERIOUS CAPTURE.

JOE had got a little in advance of the party. As he rounded a point bringing their place of destination in view, he was much struck with its beauty. It lay just inside the boundary line of the region outside of Smyrna, whose Turkish name signifies, "Garden of Eden."

"I've been in many a country," exclaimed Dicky Dawson as he joined him, "but I never seen nothin' like this. It's worth a month's pay to come here. Look at that light, shinin' through them trees, and that there river. Looks like it flowed right out o' the heart of a silver mount'in."

The place certainly had one marked resemblance to Paradise of old ; it was very sparsely populated. Nobody could be seen anywhere, excepting an old Turk. He doubtless had an Eve, or several of them, in his beautiful garden ; but when anybody was around he kept them shut up where their curiosity regarding new-comers could only be gratified by peeps through thick latticework. Certain little sounds, feminine in their import, coming from the interior of the only house the place contained con-

firmed the party in the conviction that the Turk had several wives.

The Turk was quite an old man, and looked very venerable with his long white beard, and his turban of three different colors, one above the other. When the party rode up under the trees this ancient Mahommedan was at the river's edge, religiously attending to the ablution of his feet. When he had done, he came forward and in a very dignified manner bowed to the party, and motioned for them to alight and hitch their donkeys. He then led them into a pretty bower formed by interlacing branches and thickly twining vines, containing several rough tables and rustic seats. When they were seated, he waited their orders.

"He seems to be proprietor, cook and waiter, all in one," said Doughty. "How shall we make him understand?"

"Name yer orders," said Dicky. "I knows a language as is understood in every country."

"I'll have chicken," said Joe.

"That's a crow," ejaculated Dawson.

"I'll take mutton chop," said Little Sol.

"That's a bää."

"I'll have corn' beef," said Butts.

"Don't you know better'n to ask for corn' beef in Turkey? Don't ye git salt hoss enough aboard ship? If he had it, I couldn't make him understand. The beef would be a beller, but I couldn't make him understand corn," mused Dicky.

When they had each settled on one of the three, namely chicken, mutton chop, and beefsteak, which latter is a great dish among the Turks, Dicky proceeded to crow, to bleat, and to bellow, in excellent imitation of those sounds in the animal kingdom. The Turk, without the slightest perceptible change of countenance, thoroughly comprehended the orders, and walked away with as much dignity as he would show in entering the mosque of Saint Sophia, to execute them. When he had set the articles cooking, he stepped down to the water again, looked up at the sun, prostrated himself and then repeated his pedal ablution.

"I only hope he's as attentive to his hands as he is to his feet," remarked Joe.

"That's a religious rite," said Doughty, "and I must say that I have great respect for anybody who attends to his religious duties, no matter what they are. My father says there are some splendid things in Mohammedanism and that Mohammedans have been greatly misrepresented."

"Less go in swimming," proposed Butts, who had been staring at Doughty as if he had been talking Turkish.

This proposition met the general humor, and they started for the river. Great trees grew on either bank close to the water's edge, their wide branches meeting overhead, letting the sun through the leafy canopy in slanting beams and little patches of light. It was a glorious place for swim-

ming, and in a few minutes the boys were disporting themselves in the clear water with all the exuberance of spirits belonging to their age. They could swim without the least fear of sharks, and felt great relief in having no cordon of boats to watch their every movement lest they should drown or seek to desert. It was the greatest fun they had had since leaving their own native land.

They staid in the water until the Turk came down and motioned to them that dinner was ready. They found the dishes very palatable. Butts found his beefsteak especially good. The Turk seemed to have taken the gauge of his appetite, for the steak was of enormous size. The waiter set on mastic and absinthe, and went to bring some wine, but Dawson shook his head at him. "I never 'lows boys," he said, "to use any kind o' liquor when I has charge on 'em. Bring water, *aqua*, ole man." Dicky had been very temperate since the bullfight.

The mastic and absinthe went off, and water came on. The dinner was progressing with unusual felicity, when Hanson, who sat at the end of the table pointing up the river, suddenly looked up and exclaimed, "See, coming down the river!"

Quickly turning, they saw coming up the opposite bank four men, who, from their appearance, might have belonged to the regiment of Bashi-bazouks, which the boys had seen embarking in the early part of the day. They were mounted on very fine Turco-Arabian horses, were almost giants in

size, and carried an apron-like contrivance in front of them, crowded full of small Oriental weapons of every description. Each one bore an old-fashioned carbine slung across his shoulders, and a small Turkish sword, in shape like a new moon, dangled from each rider's side. In addition to being so profusely armed, they were men of quite ferocious aspect.

Coming to a point on the shore that commanded a full view of the restaurant, they abruptly halted, and appeared to be holding a consultation. From their frequent looks and gestures toward the party, the boys easily inferred that they themselves were the subjects of conversation. After a few moments of animated debate, the troopers (we will call them such for convenience's sake) turned their horses down to the river and plunged in at the shallowest place they could find.

"That looks like they're makin' for us," remarked Dicky. "It can't be about that dog; they looks like sogers."

"I wish you hadn't shot that dog, all the same," said Doughty. "They may be mounted policemen."

"I ain't afeared on 'em," retorted Dicky. "I've done things worse nor shootin' a dog in self-defense, an' got out of it as slick as a whistle. If they be policemen, I'll take my chances, as I allers does."

The horses scrambled up the bank, the troopers

quickly dismounted and hitched them among the donkeys under the trees. They then unstrapped their carbines, stood them against a tree, and, led by the old Turk, who had gone down to receive them, they presently appeared in the bower and sat down at the table close by the one occupied by Dicky and his party. They gave the old Turk a hurried order, and he brought on wine and mastic, after which he appeared with four tiny cups of coffee.

"I forgot all about that!" exclaimed Dicky when he saw the coffee coming. "Here, ole man, bring us some. Coffee, *café*!" he called, pointing to the cups on the troopers' table, as the old Turk did not seem to understand.

In a few minutes the boys were regaling themselves with Turkish coffee, which was so thick that they had to eat it with spoons.

All the while the troopers eyed them closely, and kept asking questions of the restaurant keeper, evidently about them. Something concerning the boys was, without doubt, under grave consideration; but what could it be? Three of them seemed bent on carrying out some scheme or other relating to them, while the fourth appeared to be earnestly expostulating. The judgment of the old Turk was sought, and he seemed to agree with the remonstrator, setting forth his views with profound gravity. Some financial advantage was evidently at the bottom of the plan. They would look at the party,

and count on their fingers, as in an arithmetical calculation, appearing to be estimating the exact profit each boy would be to them.

"If I was a Hottentot jest landed from a slaver, I should think they was goin' to sell me," observed Dicky.

"It looks to me," said Doughty, "that we've got to go into a Turkish police court about that dog."

"That dog be hanged! This has got nothin' to do with that dog," answered Dicky quite fiercely.

"Less go," said Butts in a frightened whisper.

"We'll stand our ground," said Joe, showing considerable spirit. "We've got our uniforms on, and a Government uniform is as good as the flag to protect us; I heard one of the officers say so."

"If I was alone, I wouldn't let 'em take me alive. But I wouldn't risk gettin' any o' you boys shot. Ye see what a responsibility boys is," said Dicky, in the tone, if not with the elegance, of an old general.

"You can use your revolver," said Joe. "I'm sorry we didn't borrow a lot of navy revolvers from the armorer. Then we wouldn't have to be cowards."

"I wouldn't resk lettin' 'em see mine. Don't ye see the handles o' their pistles stickin' out in front on 'em? I don't want my beauty in there among 'em. Turks is covetous o' firearms. They's real estate to 'em."

"But won't you use it at all if they attempt to capture us?"

"It wouldn't be no use. Besides I've hid it in my shoe." Unobserved, Dicky had crowded his revolver into the ample top of his left shoe.

It was now certain, from the looks and gestures of the troopers, that they regarded the party as their prisoners. It was very galling to most of our young men-of-warriors to be obliged to pusillanimously yield to their enemies when they should confront them for their capture or arrest; but violent resistance, unarmed as they were, would be the sheerest folly. The troopers were evidently mountaineers, agile and powerful, and had the advantage of being armed to the teeth. Dicky Dawson saw from the beginning that the only policy would be one of nonresistance and diplomacy, and he would not listen to any other suggestion. Joe, for instance, proposed that they make a grand rush for the horses. Three of them could seize upon two horses and Little Sol and Dicky could each have a horse to himself. This was altogether impracticable, as the troopers could overtake them before they could mount and cut them down with their swords, or remain in the bower and bring some of them down with their pistols. Doughty's proposition was that they spring for the carbines, then each one could cover his man from behind a tree and Dawson could reserve his revolver for a hand-to-hand encounter in case the carbines should

be unloaded or miss fire. But it was decided that any move from the bower would bring the troopers close after them.

Dawson motioned the old Turk to come forward to receive his bill. While he was counting out the sum, in French money, which the Turk had marked upon a chip with a pencil, he observed that the troopers were getting ready for a start. As the party rose to leave the bower, the troopers jumped to their feet and moved quickly to the entrance. Each man grasped his sword hilt, indicating that all they at present desired was a peaceable surrender. This Dawson signified would be made. The leader of the troopers then made signs for them to deliver up any arms that might be concealed about their persons. Dawson shook his head. Not satisfied with this, the man proceeded to search the party. He pulled from their breast pockets the great shipknives which they wore suspended from their necks by lanyards, felt of the hoe-like edges, and returned them.

"If he only knew enough to look in your shoe, Dawson, he'd find somethin'," said Butts.

"You keep still, you lubber! How do you know but some on 'em understands a little English!"

The search finished, the troopers marched them to the donkeys and made signs for them to mount. Vaulting into their own saddles, one of them stationed himself as advance guard, leaving the other three to bring up in the rear, and the whole com-

pany set out. For a time the leader led them directly up the river. The course then deflected to the right, away from the river's bank into a ravine wild and irregular. The party wondered if there was a robber's cave anywhere in this dismal place where they would be confined until a ransom should be paid for them should it turn out, after all, that their captors were brigands instead of troopers.

No. They soon came to the farther end of the ravine, nothing like a cave having appeared, and emerged into a barren, unsettled district, lying on the southwestern slope of Mount Pagus. The only habitation visible was one of the little castles already described a long distance ahead. Pointing his horse directly for this house, the leader indicated that the march must be quickened.

"It's clear to me as these fellers isn't robbers," observed Dawson. "The mountains where bandits resides is the other way."

"I think," said Doughty, "they've simply arrested us on account of that" —

"Don't say dog to me again. I'm sick on it," replied Dicky, changing his voice from a jocose tone to a growl.

Their quickened pace brought them in a short time to the house. It was enclosed by a lofty wall, whose only opening was guarded by a solid door. A heavy pounding on this door brought a strapping young Turk, who looked out upon the company with not the least surprise discernible in his vis-

age. The instant the door swung open the leader urged his horse through, and motioned Dicky to follow. Presently all were inside the walls, and the door was securely fastened.

The troopers dismounted, secured their horses, and leaving one of their number on guard, entered the house, where they were soon heard laughing and chatting in great glee. Left comparatively alone, the boys jumped from their donkeys and took a look about the premises.

"I'm goin' to have some o' these oranges," said Butts, as he made a jump for a big one, suspended from a large limb a foot above his head.

Butts's loss of courage had not dimmed his eye to the splendid yellow fruit which hung thickly from a great number of trees in the garden. Everybody but Doughty seemed of the same mind, and Dawson seized hold of the trunk of a big tree and brought down a perfect shower of the most luscious fruit.

"What will the owner say when he finds we've been helping ourselves?" asked Doughty.

"We's prisoners," said Dicky, "and the enemy's bound to furnish our rations. It's the rule o' war. I wouldn't object to a few weeks o' this," he continued, scooping an enormous orange from the peeling; "but I'd want the run o' the house."

It was all very nice and jolly until they became surfeited with oranges, then the old perplexity returned as to what they had been captured for.

"What can they do with us here, Dawson?" asked Joe.

"They won't keep us here. When night comes they'll take us to the city. That part's clear to me. If they was robbers they wouldn't use us so well, and if they was policemen they wouldn't be stoppin' here. They's sogers, for they has a military bearin'. But what they wants with us is the biggest puzzle I ever worked on. This is the boss scrape I ever got into ashore, but I'll get ye out all right, or my name isn't Dicky Dawson."

True to Dicky's suspicion, night found them again on the move, making, by a circuitous route, their way quite rapidly into the city.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JOE'S CRUISE AGREEABLY ENDED.

THAT boy has not returned, sir. He was one of a party that went ashore in charge of Dawson early this morning. They had strict orders to be at the landing for the sundown boat."

"Do you know of any reason why he should overstay his liberty, even if Dawson got to drinking?"

"None whatever, sir. He has never been on the report book, and he and Boy Doughty are the best boys in the ship."

"I would like to have him all ready to take the *Messageries Impériales* steamer which clears for Marseilles to-morrow evening. You may send the master-at-arms ashore to hunt him up."

"Very good, sir."

This conversation took place about ten o'clock at night in the cabin of the flagship, between the captain and his executive. The subject was no other than our friend Joe. Very strange things had been happening him on all sides, and now the strangest of all had taken place. A letter had reached the admiral that day from the Honorable

Secretary of the Navy, directing him to detach First Class Boy Bently (Joe had recently been advanced to this rate), and order him home by the first steamer that should leave for Marseilles. Thence he was to proceed overland to Havre, where he would take the French steamer *Labrador* for New York.

In explanation of this, it was stated that the Congressman from Joe's district in Maine, had nominated him as a candidate for appointment as a cadet midshipman to the Naval Academy at Annapolis. An official letter had also come from the same high authority to Joe himself, formally granting him permission to appear before the examining boards, before whom all candidates must appear previous to their admission to the academy.

The executive officer returned to the cabin, after directing the officer of the deck to send a boat ashore immediately with the master-at-arms, and read the correspondence relating to Joe.

"I don't know of an apprentice boy whom I would rather see get such an appointment, sir, than Bently," said the executive, resuming the conversation. "He's very modest and quiet, but bright, and as smart physically as steel. He is singularly fearless, and doesn't seem to have any appreciation of danger to himself in anything. I wouldn't be sorry to see Boy Doughty, too, meet with the same luck."

"It's a very unusual thing," replied the captain.

"I don't see, however, why an apprentice boy, with the right stuff in him, shouldn't be appointed to the Naval Academy as well as any other boy. A year's training at sea is a splendid preliminary preparation. I'm very glad the boy has got the appointment."

The news of Joe's appointment had got quickly around the ship. Long before sunset the top-gallant-forecastle was lined with boys watching for his return. The sundown boat returning empty, caused a feeling of general disappointment; for the boys had arranged to give Joe a sailor boy ovation. When tattoo came, and the party was still missing, many of the boys requested permission to remain out of their hammocks another hour. At ten o'clock they stowed themselves reluctantly away, feeling that some very strange thing must have happened to keep Joe and Doughty out of the ship, against orders, so late at night, and the officers felt the same way. Before they turned in, the boys belonging to the different anchor watches agreed that if Joe should come off in either watch, they would keep the news a profound secret, and in the morning they could all congratulate him together. But we may have already told too much about Master Joe's affairs before he is acquainted with them himself, and we will hasten back to him, letting them come in in their more natural order.

In the oldest and most tumble-down part of Smyrna, stands, or rather leans, against innumerable props, an ancient caravansary. It is not much

frequented, like the others of the city, by caravans, but chiefly by a class of people who come from nobody knows where, and whose visits to the town are usually regarded with suspicion. An occasional Arab, Bashi-bazouks, and many others of indeterminate race or nation may always be seen hanging about this place. Travellers are curious to see this khan because it gives them a sight of so many strange men, and because it is one of the institutions of the country.

Up to this caravansary, late at night, having skirted the city through dark streets and dismal alleys, rode our party. Nobody was stirring about the premises as they entered the court lighted only by moonbeams ; but they could hear the sound of heavy breathing issuing from the little apartments opening all around from the enclosure, and the many horses hitched on all sides kept up an incessant rattle by the nervous striking of their feet against the pavement. Judging from the large number of horses, it might be the temporary quarters of a cavalry regiment.

The troopers jumped from their horses and signalled the boys to dismount. One of the men then took charge of the horses, leaving the donkeys to look out for themselves, and the other three started the prisoners through a narrow passage which led to the rear of the great building surrounding the court. Presently they came to a massive oaken door crossed with iron bands sol-

idly riveted, and secured by a heavy iron bar and staple from which depended an immense padlock. Fumbling among his weapons the leader of the troopers now produced a rusty key which he inserted in the lock, and after much turning and numerous ejaculations which were undoubtedly execrations in Turkish, the lock yielded and an entrance was effected.

The apartment into which the door swung was unusually large, and was, no doubt, in the more reputable days of the caravansary, used as a place for the safe keeping of valuables. Now it seemed in disuse, unless, indeed, as in the present instance, it occasionally served for a prison. High up, in the rear of the room, were two rectangular openings in the wall which were the only windows of the place. Through these apertures just moonlight enough was straying to reveal the gloomy interior, which was totally empty of everything but a heap of rubbish, lying in dismal outline in a far corner.

Directed by his chief, one of the troopers now disappeared, and in a few moments returned bringing several loaves of bread and a large *carafe* of water, which he placed upon the floor. All three then took their departure, the click of the rusty lock sounding dismally enough in our hero's ears as they securely fastened the door.

"They doesn't mean to starve us, anyway," said Dawson as he broke one of the loaves in two, and held it up for inspection by the moonlight. "Boys,

we won't eat that stuff," he continued. "It's blackern the ace o' spades, an' looks like it was some o' Noah's sea bread when he was admiral o' the ark."

"I'd like to know what they're going to do with us," said Doughty, who had sat down on the floor in very low spirits.

"I'll never go nowhere with Dawson ag'in," said Butts. "I didn't want him to boss us this mornin'."

"I'll tell ye what I think," spoke up Dicky. "They's goin' to cut off Butts's years in the mornin', an' send 'em off to claim a ransom. They's sharp enough to see that Butts's years would be known all around the ship."

"I don't see how you can make fun, when we don't know that we'll ever see the ship again," said Doughty, in a melancholy and reproachful tone.

"It's jest the time to make fun. It's no good when everything's bright an' lovely. I's never really cheerful till I needs to be. This's a good deal better'n' bein' on a raft a thousand miles from any land, an' a big storm comin' on. Wait till you's been to sea as long as I has, an' you won't growl at this."

Whether he really felt so or not, Dicky's cheerfulness had a very reassuring effect upon the boys. No cloud was so black but that Dicky could put a fringe on it that would greatly relieve it of its

gloom. He had a wonderful knack at this kind of embroidery.

All the boys but Joe had a little grumble over what they thought had been a too-willing surrender, but Joe stood loyally by his leader. A little thought convinced him that any resistance or any attempted ruse, unarmed as they were, could have resulted only in their defeat and probably have left some of them dead, or maimed for life.

"Have you settled upon what they're going to do with us, Dawson?" he inquired.

"I think we's been kidnapped for sogers. But Dicky Dawson'll never fight ag'in no Rooshians, for no Turks. Rooshy's the best friend we's got among the powers. But we'll have no more talk now. You can all turn in, an' I'll stan' watch."

The tired boys stretched themselves out on the hard floor, and in a few minutes they were all asleep.

A long time Dicky stood pondering. With all his cheerfulness and serenity he felt the gravity of the situation. If they had been kidnapped, as he surmised, he was perplexed to know why they had not been taken to a transport at once. The only solution he could get to this was that the steamer they had seen receiving troops in the morning had doubtless sailed, and the captors were waiting for another. The theory that they were merely under arrest for having killed the dog, he had dismissed. Seized with a new idea, he started

up all at once and went to the heap of rubbish and began to industriously search among the contents. It was not long before he made a discovery which greatly pleased him. Thrusting his hand deep down in the pile, he drew forth a rusty iron bar, which had without doubt once served to help protect a Turkish window. Laying this carefully down, he proceeded to examine the walls with the greatest care. The moon now sent a flood of light into the apartment which greatly facilitated his investigations. Several times he went back and forth along the rear wall, examining it as high up as he could reach. The solid wall in the portion examined afforded no place where an opening could be effected, and Dawson turned his attention higher up. As he did so a stone standing out several inches from the wall caught his eye.

He stepped over to where Joe lay sleeping, and shaking him gently, whispered to him that he desired his assistance. When Joe was fairly awake, Dicky directed him to climb on his shoulders, and see if the projecting stone was loose. Though some of the mortar had fallen away, Joe could not move the stone. Letting him get down, Dawson got his iron bar, and told him to try that. Remounting Dicky's shoulders, Joe got the end of the bar under the stone, and by exerting all the strength he could in his awkward position, he started the stone from its place, and it fell down, nearly crushing Dawson's foot as it reached the floor.

For a few moments they were afraid that the loud noise the stone made in striking the oaken floor would start up the troopers. After listening some little time, they were satisfied that it had not been heard, and Dicky told Joe to wake up the boys, cautioning him to do it gently, as everything now must be done noiselessly.

Joe whispered to his companions that they were about to try for their escape, and that their help was needed. If Dicky's purpose had been to tunnel under the Hudson, or to take down the walls of Fort Monroe, he would have found the boys under the present circumstances enthusiastic to undertake it. He told Little Sol to stand by the door and to report the least noise he should hear; then he directed Joe to stand upon Doughty's and Hanson's shoulders, who were about the same size, with Butts to steady him, and, from this scaffolding, to pry up the stones and hand them down to him.

Thus organized they set to work.

Joe could see through the aperture made by the removal of the stone that the outer part of the wall had fallen down a number of feet, leaving but one tier of stones down to a line that would strike through at about the middle of the inner portion of the wall. As the stones were not very heavy, he found but little difficulty in loosening them. With a frequent change of base on the part of the three boys who were supporting him, in about an

hour Joe had a breach in the wall large enough to crawl through.

"That's big enough," whispered Dawson. "How does it look out there?"

Joe stuck his head out, and took a good look around. The only living creatures he could see were a litter of puppies, crawling over the fallen portion of the wall, and a donkey, which stared up at him as though he were a ghost. The place looked something like the yard of a box-factory. Lumber lay all around, and by means of the bright moonlight shining into the only building the place contained, Joe saw the gleam of several circular saws. A high wall enclosed the place, but with the lumber at hand they could easily surmount that obstacle.

Reporting his observations to Dawson, Dicky told him to let himself down, which he did to the imminent peril of the puppies. The embrasure had been brought to a point low enough for the party to scramble up to it, and in a few minutes they had all followed Joe and stood in a group in the yard. Rummaging around a little, they found a long plank which they raised to the wall, and up this narrow pass they crawled and dropped nimbly to the street on the other side.

"Things allers works out right," said Dicky. "I's been in many a country, an' in all kinds o' scrapes, an' luck's never gone ag'in me yet."

Joe and Doughty attributed their preservation

and escape to a much higher and more trustworthy power than luck. They were very happy boys as they made their way back to the quay, talking about the fearful night in the cutter, as their great sea adventure, and the one they had just passed through as its thrilling counterpart on shore.

The first rays of the sun were just breaking over the high eastern hills across the bay, when the party pulled alongside in a caique. A rich flood of light overspread ship and shore, a prophecy of the good news Joe was about to hear, as Dicky led the boys to the mast, and told the officer of the deck the story of their capture and escape. The officer of the deck agreed with Dawson that it was a case of kidnapping for the Turkish army or navy. As Dicky had surmised, the transport they had seen the day before, sailed about noon. Forestalling a little we may here add that the admiral looked into the matter, but could get no satisfaction from the Turkish authorities, who claimed that the kidnappers were not soldiers, but robbers, and that they were doing all they could to suppress brigandage. The donkeys were found at the caravansary, and returned to their owners, and the affair of shooting the dog was never heard from.

The officer of the deck, knowing nothing of the agreement of secrecy among the boys, informed Joe of his appointment as cadet midshipman; and told him he could take his hammock from the netting and turn in for a couple of hours. This was

so far beyond Joe's hopes and dreams, and so in accord with his desires, that a man might as well be told to go to sleep over the news that he had become heir to an immense fortune, as for him to be told that he might sleep now. Dropping below, he found a number of letters awaiting him. One was a very kind letter from the Congressman; the others were from home, from Mr. Aston and Katie. They were full of congratulations and earnest hopes for his success at the academy. It was very easy for him to conjecture who it was that had secured the appointment. He recalled vividly the look which Mr. Aston gave him on board the brig, when the lady asked him if it were possible for an apprentice boy ever to become an officer in the Navy.

And now nothing remained but for Joe to take his departure. This was a hard ordeal. As he stood at the gangway while the cutter, which had been manned with boys, with Doughty for coxswain, in his honor, was coming round to the gangway, Dicky Dawson came up to him, and seizing him by the hand, said, with the tears standing in his eyes: "I allers took stock in you. When you gits shoulder knots an' a sword on, you musn't forgit ole Dicky Dawson an' the likes o' him."

The boat which was to convey him to the steamer was alongside. As she pushed off with our hero, the boys were allowed to cheer him from the lower rigging. There was an affecting leave-taking be-

tween Joe and Doughty at the steamer, then they separated forever as apprentice boys.

Several years have passed. By strange coincidences, Doughty is first mate of the *Katie Aston* with a fine prospect of soon becoming her master. About Joe we shall again hear in his opening career as an officer in the United States Navy.

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